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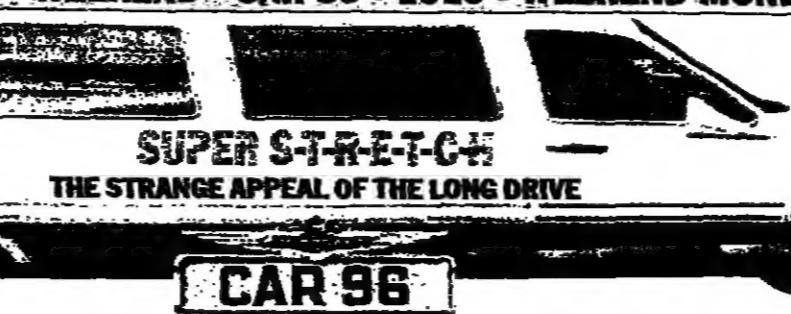
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GUIDE  
in the



7-DAY TV AND RADIO GUIDE • WEEKEND • CAR 96 • 1015 • WEEKEND MONEY • THE MAGAZINE

SIMON JENKINS

WHY EMMA IS  
STILL EXQUISITE  
PAGE 20



CAR 96

MONDAY

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LUXURY  
BREAKS  
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TRAVIS HEYING/AP

Blair ready for conference backlash

## Unions warn Labour over severing links

BY JILL SHERMAN  
AND PHILIP BASSETT

TRADE union leaders said yesterday that the Labour leadership would be committing political suicide if it went ahead with plans to sever the party's links with the unions.

Tony Blair is now bracing himself for a backlash at the party conference this month when trade unions may seek revenge for his repeated attempts to undermine them. John Monks, the TUC General Secretary and an ally of Mr Blair, delivered his second attack on the leadership this week when he said the conference in Blackpool had been dominated by "confusion not clarity" and demanded a "surter touch" from Labour.

Mr Monks is said to be furious that Mr Blair's plans to curb union power had overshadowed the TUC conference. But union leaders reserved their sharpest attacks for Stephen Byers, the Shadow Employment Minister, who identified himself as the source of the reports in several newspapers, including *The Times*, that Labour would break the union link.

John Edmonds, General Secretary of the GMB workers' union, called on the Labour leaders to move Mr Byers from his post as industrial affairs spokesman after the shadow minister discussed the issue with journalists over a dinner in Blackpool on Wednesday. "Stephen Byers should carry a black box

### Moment of truth

A dinner at the Seafood Restaurant in Blackpool was the setting when Stephen Byers revealed that Labour would not be held to ransom by the unions. — Page 5

recorder so that after each accident we can all analyse exactly what happened," Mr Edmonds said.

Mr Byers had damaged his credibility with Labour and the unions, he added. "After a decent time, it would be wise to consider that he be moved sideways."

John Prescott, the Labour deputy leader, who was unaware of the proposal when he arrived in Blackpool, shrugged off the row, suggesting: "This is massive speculation by a press looking for a major story."

Mr Byers told four political journalists of a contingency plan to ballot the entire party membership on ending the link with the unions if there was a wave of strikes in the first summer of a Labour government.

Publicly, union leaders accepted the firm disavowal of the reports by Tony Blair's office, but privately many remain suspicious that the reports do indicate the direction of Labour's thinking about the trade unions.

Peter Riddell, page 20  
Leading article, page 21

investigators will be given

blanket powers to inspect all bank records, historical documents and other relevant archives. Banking secrecy, a pillar of the Swiss banking system, will be suspended until the investigators have completed their work.

The law will be confirmed by a referendum. The investigators will examine not only the German Reichsbank's sale of gold, but also the extent and fate of assets transferred to banks, insurance companies, lawyers, notaries, fiduciaries, asset managers or other individuals or groups based in Switzerland. This includes all money for deposit, investment or transfer to third parties and all assets received by the Swiss National Bank.

The draft decree obtained yesterday by *The Times* shows that the Swiss Government has decided that the controversy is now so embarrassing that the issue must be cleared up once and for all. The

work will begin as soon as possible, are also empowered to look at any money that belonged to the victims of Nazi rule, including those who perished in the Holocaust. The experts will attempt to find out what happened to the assets that have not been recovered by legitimate claimants.

The draft says that the scope of the investigation will also cover all those who, as a consequence of racial laws or other discriminatory measures in the German Reich, had their property taken from them. And it will look at money coming from the Nazis themselves, much of which was believed to have been hurriedly deposited in Swiss

Continued on page 2, col 3

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Continued on page 2, col 3

### Record sales for The Times

Average daily sales of *The Times* were a monthly record in August. At 764,617, they were up by 10,833 on July and by 86,166 (12.7 per cent) on August 1995. This marks the third successive month in which monthly sales have reached record levels making *The Times* the fastest-growing quality newspaper in Britain.

Buying *The Times* overseas: Austria Sch 40; Belgium B Frs 40; Canada \$3.50; France 325; Germany DM 10; Denmark Dkr 14.00; Finland Frk 17.00; France F 14.00; Germany Dr 4.00; Netherlands Fr 4.50; Italy L 4.500; Luxembourg 60; Monaco M 10; Norway Kr 20.00; Portugal Con Esc 3.50; Spain Pts 3.25; Sweden Kr 10.00; Switzerland Fr 4.00; Turkey L 2.00; USA \$3.50.

The Times on the Internet  
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### Nazi gold outcry drives Swiss to suspend banking secrecy

BY MICHAEL BINION  
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Swiss Government, stung by the furor over Nazi gold held in Swiss bank vaults, is to publish a decree on Monday ordering all bank records and accounts of all wartime financial dealings with the Nazis to be turned over to a special investigating committee.

Anyone who destroys any document to prevent its publication will be sent to jail or fined up to SF 50,000 (about £28,000).

The draft decree obtained yesterday by *The Times* shows that the Swiss Government has decided that the controversy is now so embarrassing that the issue must be cleared up once and for all. The

### Share prices sweep to a new high

BY JEREMY LAURANCE  
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

AS EIGHT American F117 fighter-bombers landed at Kuwait's Al Jaber air base last night, the Kuwaiti Government defended its decision to augment its firepower in the region in anticipation of fresh air strikes on Iraq.

The Stealth aircraft barely visible with their dull black camouflage and betrayed only by the roar of their powerful engines, were immediately taxied into hardened bunkers

to prepare for their expected offensive against Iraqi positions.

Sheikh Saud Nasser al-

Sabah, Kuwait's Information Minister, said yesterday that the Emirate had the right to take whatever measures it deemed necessary to defend itself in the face of threats from the Iraqi regime. Kuwait had the right to defend its territorial integrity, and "to take all precautions to safeguard its security, safety, and the well-being of its citizens," he said.

Extra police were deployed at checkpoints throughout the

city on Thursday night to check identity papers amid rumors that Kuwait faced the threat of retaliatory terrorist attacks from Iraqi "fifth columnists".

Although there are no signs of panic among Kuwait's 1.8 million population, the authorities have been at pains to dispel rumors that President Saddam Hussein had moved troops towards the border and that the international airport had been closed.

Iraqi land and air forces were greatly weakened by the allied offensive to expel Iraq from Kuwait, and the cumulative effect of six years of UN

### NHS trust for aged may fail after losing £17m contracts

merge with a neighbouring trust, as has happened in the past when trusts have run into financial difficulties.

In a statement, the health authorities said the trust had difficulty recruiting consultant psychiatrists and experienced clinicians because of its small size. Switching the contracts to neighbouring trusts would save a potential £1 million in management costs.

David White, chief executive of Suffolk health authority, said: "This is a serious step not undertaken lightly. But the interests of local people are paramount."

Anglian Harbours has already lost its mental health contracts, worth £8.4 million, which is to be switched next April. The further contracts, to be withdrawn next August,

are worth another £9 million. George Doran, chief executive of Anglian Harbours said: "I suppose losing that level of income would tend to imply that we are going out of business but that is for the trust board to decide, as and when it happens."

He said he had no prior warning of the decision and disputed the need for it. The trust board had asked both authorities to justify their actions.

A health department spokesman said the matter was one for the health authorities and the trust to sort out locally. Asked if the Government would allow the trust to go bankrupt, he said: "That hasn't happened before."

Vaccine price, page 10

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# THE TIMES ON MONDAY

## 16-PAGE SPORTS SECTION

EVERY SUMMER  
MONDAY  
10P

### THE BIG MATCH

David Miller  
reports from  
Stamford  
Bridge on  
Chelsea v  
Aston Villa



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on how to have  
a great gap year

EVERY MONDAY: MATTHEW PARRIS,  
COLUMNIST OF THE YEAR

# Driving bans may soon apply in all EU states

By CHARLES BRENNER  
AND STEWART TENDERL

DRIVERS disqualified in one European Union country would be banned in all 15 member states under plans being studied by ministers and officials.

The scheme was set out in a draft convention by the Italians during their presidency of the EU earlier this year. It could become law by 1998.

The scheme would also stop motorists who are banned from driving in their home country applying for a licence in another member state, without necessarily having to inform that country's authorities of their status. Banned Germans, for example,

have exploited the system by applying for licences in Britain.

The K4 committee of interior ministry officials is now looking at the convention. It would mainly ensure that information about driving bans was passed to other countries. It would be up to the countries to ensure that the ban was enforced there.

Most member states strongly support the principle of recognising driving bans and the subject has raised passions, especially in the northern states which have the strictest driving laws. The idea has been on the table for eight years already and introducing the scheme could take considerable negotiations

but the idea has the blessing of MEPs and many international motoring agencies, including the AA and the RAC.

Yesterday the Department of Transport said any scheme would have to overcome legal differences between countries and different standards for disqualification. Britain, for example, has a different level of disqualification for drink-driving than some other EU countries. A spokesman for the Home Office said the scheme might be limited to particular types of offence.

A Commission spokeswoman said that the convention was still blocked by a series of objections by member states. She said: "It is not absolutely

impossible that it will pass, but it is stuck for the time being."

Mutual recognition of disqualification has always run into member states' resistance to aligning national legislation on driving offences. They jealously guard their sovereignty over judicial affairs. Once broad agreement is found, an accord would have to be passed by the Council of Ministers. This could happen next year.

The European Parliament called for broad action on harmonising driving penalties earlier this month. The Brussels Commission effectively ruled this out because of the difficulty of pulling penal codes into line across the union. The Parliament also voted

for the creation of an EU-wide penalty points system of the kind now operating in France and Britain.

"We think it's a point of principle," Mark Wats, a British Labour MEP, said after the first-reading amendment. "These people are driving a dangerous weapon. We cannot afford to give them the benefit of the doubt."

Neil Kinnock, the Transport Commissioner, said the Commission could not support the Parliament's call for a universal penalty points system because it was legally unworkable.

This effectively scuppered the parliamentary measure because Commission backing is required for an amendment to pass.

### Two more Tory MPs to retire

Two further Conservative MPs announced last night that they would retire from the Commons at the next general election, bringing to 59 the number who are to leave the Tory benches.

The senior backbenchers Sir Tom Arnold, 49, MP for Hazel Grove and Barry Porter, 57, MP for Wirral South, are both standing down for medical reasons. Sir Tom, who has been MP for the Cheshire constituency for 22 years, contracted malaria in Africa earlier this year. John Carlisle announced earlier this week that he was standing down from his Luton North constituency because he wanted "to pursue other interests".

### Museum given War medals

A collection of medals awarded to Rosine Witton, a member of the French Resistance who helped more than 70 Allied airmen to escape capture in the Second World War, was formally presented to the Imperial War Museum.

Madame Witton, née Therier, who died last year aged 89, joined the Resistance after the arrest and deportation to Germany of her British husband. She helped Allied servicemen on the run in France after Dunkirk.

### Asylum seekers' ruling delayed

A High Court judge yesterday reserved judgment on an attempt to force local councils to provide asylum seekers "with the basics for survival" while their claims for refugee status are considered by the Government.

Earlier, Nigel Pleming, QC, appearing for the Health Secretary, said it was a clear decision by Parliament to deny public funds or housing to those who did not claim at their port of entry and the courts could not interfere.

### CORRECTION

The number to ring for information on Heritage Open Days is 0891 800603, not the number given on page 14 in some copies of Weekend today.

### Nazi gold

Continued from page 1  
accounts by senior Nazis before the collapse in 1945.

The decree is phrased in as broad a way as possible to include every aspect of the National Socialist state — "its institutions or representatives, as well as physical or legal persons closely connected with it, including all financial transactions which were carried out with these assets".

The aim clearly is to end the rumours which still circulate that well-placed fugitive Nazis were able to recover much of these ill-gotten gains from Swiss bank accounts after the war. It has even been argued — though briskly dismissed by the British Government and most historians — that Martin Bormann, the executor of Hitler's will, survived after escaping from the bunker and withdrew huge sums of Nazi gold under his own legal signature.

The law specifically empowers the investigators to look at the measures taken by Switzerland since 1945, including the controversial refusal by Swiss negotiators at first even to admit to the Allies that they held any gold bought from the Nazis.

If the experts make any new discovery or turn up previously unknown evidence of gold deposits, they will be authorised to change the scope of their investigation in the light of their findings. Privately, many bankers and Swiss officials say that it is unlikely they will find much that is new, especially as many of the key figures in the postwar negotiations are now dead.

The investigating team, still to be nominated, will be drawn by the Berne federal Government from a variety of fields. The British Government welcomed the move by the Swiss, saying that it would help to clear up the mystery of how the gold came to be stored in Switzerland.



Keith Jones, of the NFU, sings to promote an album of songs praising British beef yesterday

# Tories attack 'insensitive' EU threat on beef imports

FROM CHARLES BRENNER  
IN BRUSSELS

A THREAT to put Britain in the dock of the European Court for restricting cattle imports from the Continent was described as "extraordinarily insensitive" last night by John Major.

Franz Fischler, the Farm Commissioner, is to warn Britain that it is breaking EU law by blocking the import of foreign cattle less than 30 months old. Yet Britain imposed the ban as part of its curbs on BSE, to accompany the slaughter of domestic cattle over 30 months.

British officials say that administering the cull would be impossible without a parallel ban on imports. The Prime Minister said: "We have made a decision that people will not eat beef over 30 months old in this country on health grounds. I would think it is extraordinarily insensitive if that is the way that our colleagues in Europe behave."

"There are genuine concerns in this country about some of the developments taking place in the European Union. I share those concerns. We are often invited to be sensitive to European opinion. I invite the European to be sensitive to our opinion."

An EU spokesman said that the warning to Britain — which could be followed by proceedings at the European Court of Justice — will also be

applied to France, Germany, Spain and other EU states which have introduced restrictions seen as a breach of the single market.

France and Spain have bans on meat and bonemeal, and North Rhine-Westphalia bans British dairy produce. Each government will be given a grace period to correct the alleged breach before court action. A Commission official said: "This is not something we want to do, but the member states know that they are breaking the rules when they impose their own import restrictions. Agreement has to be reached before such things can be done."

Officials said Germany was the main target of Herr

Fischler's action. The action against Britain was ironic, given that it was itself the subject of a blanket ban, but its action could not be ignored.

Gerry Kiely, the Commission spokesman, noted that Britain would stand to gain if its infringement proceedings led re-open markets on the Continent. On the action against Britain, he said: "There is a certain understanding of the difficulty of Britain's position, but we have a legal responsibility."

The threat of court action will further sour the atmosphere as Douglas Hogg, the agriculture minister, prepares to present Britain's new case for revising the cull to European colleagues on Monday.

# Major calls for end to soundbite politics

BY ALICE THOMSON  
POLITICAL REPORTER

JOHN MAJOR ended his two-week tour of Britain last night with a plea to Tony Blair for an end to soundbite politics.

Despite making liberal use of them during his tour, when discussing everything from his wife Norma to Labour's tax plans, the Prime Minister said he would prefer "mature debate" on the issues of the day.

Mr Major said he hoped the two leaders would be able to have serious

discussions amid the "shot and shell" of everyday political battle in the run-up to the General Election.

He complained that politics was being trivialised and blamed the speed of modern reporting, which he said put pressure on politicians to give reactions to matters that had happened shortly beforehand on the other side of the world.

He said it was farcical that politicians were expected to have a view on everything, even hedge cutting in County Antrim. Instead they should be thinking about "the great issues that

affect our life — our prosperity, our family, our nation and our future."

Speaking at a fundraising lunch in Glasgow for the Newspaper Press Fund, Mr Major said he wanted to concentrate his mind of the "great matters of the day rather than trivia," and he was wasting his time becoming involved in a battle of wits with interviewers over day-to-day controversy.

Mr Major called for a return to late 19th century politics when Prime Ministers were not constantly badgered by journalists looking for stories.

"Just as the Midlothian Campaign and tariff reform could be debated in length and depth before the mass media age, so today issues like devolution, Europe and the future of Nato deserve serious attention," he said.

Labour said last night it was ludicrous for Mr Major to try to take the moral highground. Helen Liddell, Labour MP for Monklands East, said:

"The Prime Minister ought to clean up his own act before he starts lecturing others. He should lead by example and dump the trivial demon eyes campaign against Tony Blair."

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## Doctor mistook brain tumour for food allergy

By STEPHEN FARRELL



A GP WHO treated a five-year-old brain tumour patient with homeopathic remedies was ordered to be struck off yesterday after he admitted mistaking her symptoms for a peanut butter allergy.

Dr Robert Blomfield, 58, was found guilty of serious professional misconduct after he failed to carry out a brain scan or reflexes test on Eliza May Connally.

Eliza, now 12, was left paralysed on the left side, blind and partly deaf. She was sent to hospital for emergency brain surgery in March 1990 by another GP only when her parents moved to Liverpool from Dr Blomfield's practice in Hebden Bridge, west Yorkshire. The doctor wept as he admitted to the professional conduct committee of the General Medical Council that he might not have done enough to diagnose the illness.

Eliza's mother told the hearing that she went to his surgery in January 1990 when her daughter began suffering from vomiting, severe headaches, sensitivity to noise and light and started to walk with an uncoordinated "lolling" gait. Despite these symptoms of a tumour, Dr Blomfield did not carry out a neurological examination or look into the child's eyes. Instead he diagnosed her as extremely sensitive and prescribed homeopathic remedies, based mainly on deadly nightshade.

"I thought she might be allergic to orange juice or peanut butter, which she told me she liked," he told the hearing.

Announcing the finding of guilt on four charges the committee's chairman, Dr Jeremy Lee-Potter, condemned Dr Blomfield's treatment of Eliza as "grossly inadequate".

The hearing was told that on Eliza's second visit to Dr Blomfield, three weeks after the first, he diagnosed that she was probably suffering from hydrocephalus. But he carried out his first home visit only after his wife Jane, Eliza's teacher, noticed her strange walk in class and rang him immediately, realising something was wrong. Cross-

examined by Miss Foster, she agreed it was "absolutely clear that this little girl was sick".

Dr Blomfield went to the family's house on March 30, only to find Eliza in severe pain and her parents extremely angry. "I came into a really serious situation. I was just thrown. It was as though I had been caught out, partly by my own fault," he told the hearing.

Despite correctly diagnosing hydrocephalus he did not write a referral letter, but simply gave Mrs Kennedy the address of a homeopathic doctor in Liverpool.

On the family's arrival in Merseyside, friends took her to a local GP, who was "stunned" at Eliza's condition and immediately referred her to a specialist neurological unit at Walton Hospital for emergency surgery. She later developed meningitis and was in hospital for five months.

Rosalind Foster, counsel for the GMC, told Dr Blomfield: "You completely failed to take on board the elementary signs of danger. Some might have seen the condition of the child, scooped her into a car and taken her to hospital. Did that occur to you?" The GP replied: "No."

Malcolm Fortune, for Dr Blomfield, said other GPs had treated Eliza and none noticed anything wrong. Dr Blomfield had 28 days in which to appeal.



Elaine Jordache arriving at Cambridge County Court with the Prime Minister's son yesterday

## Major minor offers moral support to divorced friend

By ALAN HAMILTON

JAMES MAJOR, the Prime Minister's 22-year-old son, spent three hours in court yesterday to offer moral support to a divorced woman with whom he has been romantically linked. He received a parking ticket for his pains.

While his parents prepared to travel to Balmoral for the Prime Minister's traditional summer weekend with the Queen, James Major sat in the waiting room of Cambridge County Court as Elaine Jordache and her former husband Michael remained closeted with judges and lawyers arguing over the final details of an acrimonious divorce that ended a six-year marriage.

James had travelled from Milton Keynes, where he is a Marks & Spencer trainee manager, apparently intending to comfort Mrs Jordache, 32, during a trying morning of legal negotiation. He sat patiently in the waiting room with Mrs Jordache's father but achieved little more than a brief wave as Mrs Jordache hustled from one courtroom to another with her legal team.

James had apparently hoped to be on hand to celebrate a final resolution to Mrs Jordache's divorce terms at lunchtime, but by 1pm, with legal argument still in full flow behind closed doors, he had to return to work. It was then that he found his car had been ticketed for a parking infringement. The divorce case was adjourned and the parties must return to court at a date to be arranged.

When Mr Jordache, 42, a shopkeeper from Great Gransden, Cambridgeshire, filed for divorce a year ago, he named James Major as the third party. The couple are reported to have met when James began training at the group's Cambridge store three years ago with Mrs Jordache as his supervisor. They were said to have been interviewed by company officials when their relationship became known; he has since been moved to Milton Keynes, she to Leicester.

## Pop split of the decade off as Oasis make up

By CAROL MIDGLEY

OASIS, one of the more quarrelsome bands in modern pop history, appeared to have kissed and made up yesterday after it was announced that they would not be splitting after all.

The Gallagher brothers, Liam, 23, and Noel, 28, who days ago were at each other's throats while touring in America, were back in London.

Their record company, Creation, said: "Unfortunately the band will not be touring in the foreseeable future, but in every other respect Oasis will continue to function as a band. Oasis have all arrived back in England. Noel and Liam are spending time together."

Speculation was rife on Thursday that the band was about to split after Noel flew home to Britain alone after a dispute with his brother in which blows were exchanged. Their ninth American tour was abandoned two thirds of the way through, and fans feared that this time the rift was irreconcilable.

Thousands who had bought tickets for concerts in Atlanta, West Palm Beach, Orlando and Tampa, were claiming their money back. Although critics said it was a publicity stunt, sources close to the band said that the brothers genuinely had reached a breaking point with the strain of touring.

Yesterday morning Liam flew into Gatwick from Atlanta with the rest of the band, refusing to comment. Surrounded by bodyguards, he was whisked into a waiting vehicle and refused even to trade his customary insults with reporters.

At one stage speculation over Noel's whereabouts was fuelled when a hired van collected two scooters from his home in St John's Wood. The pink and pale blue Velociferos, belonging to



A scooter is removed from Noel's home

## Broker asks court to evict his girlfriend

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A STOCKBROKER who thought he had found a bride through a dating agency had to resort to the courts to evict her from the home they shared after the relationship turned sour.

Colin Kettle's girlfriend, Sally, even changed her name from Tonkinson to Kettle. The couple shared a five-bedroom bungalow in Bromsgrove, Hereford and Worcester, and they set a wedding date for June. Ms Kettle, 43, refused to move after the relationship broke down in the spring. But in a last-minute deal she agreed to leave the house and return to her former home near Cardiff.

The red-brick bungalow, set back on a country lane in a small commuter-belt village, became the focus of a bitter wrangle in June after Mr Kettle, who works for the Birmingham stockbrokers Harris Allday Lea & Brooks, asked Ms Kettle to leave the bungalow which he had invited her to share in December last year.

The couple's relationship had blossomed after they met through a national dating agency in May 1994. Mr Kettle, 49, had recently split from his second wife and, after several dates, wrote to Ms Kettle and asked her to marry him and move into his house with her two children, Charlotte, 12, and David, 11.

She moved in just before Christmas and the wedding date was set, but the relationship deteriorated. Mr Kettle moved out and asked her to vacate the home but Ms Kettle, who has a hip condition and needs crutches, refused.

In a statement to Redditch Crown Court on Thursday, Deputy District Judge Brian O'Connell said the Ms Kettle had to leave the property by November 8.



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## Gambling manservant stole antique silver from count

A COUNT'S manservant who stole his employer's antique silver to pay for his gambling addiction was jailed for two years yesterday.

Rex Belarmino, 35, who lived in at the Italian banker's home in Belgravia, central London, repeatedly plundered the safe, using his knowledge of the alarm system. He took seven solid silver platters, nine silver trays and 21 silver plates, worth nearly £23,000, from Count Pietro Antonelli.

Belarmino, a trained reflexologist and physiotherapist who had continued his practice, pawned the items for £2,000. He spent all the

prosecution, told Southwark Crown Court. But unable to live with his guilt, he tearfully confessed his months of dishonesty to his employer.

Judge Watts said that what Belarmino, who was born in the Philippines, had done amounted to "successive breaches of trust". He added: "They were committed for a reason which on a certain view aggravates the offences."

Belarmino admitted six offences of theft between February and July and asked for 14 similar charges to be considered. Jason Dunn-Shaw, Belarmino's barrister, had earlier told the court that a friendship between his client

and the count had retrieved his

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Not fade away



For nearly 40 years, the Buddy Holly legend has portrayed him as a chastely shining saint rather than a boy of flesh and blood. The truth is that in the tumultuous last two years of his life, love and sex got him into such a series of tangles that he nearly threw away his chance of fame...

Exclusive extract from Philip Norman's new biography of Buddy Holly — News Review. The Sunday Times tomorrow

## Rejected Paige takes Broadway by storm at last

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

TWO decades after the American actors' union sourly prevented her from performing *Evita*, the West End star Elaine Paige was cheered to the gods and received a prolonged standing ovation on her Broadway debut.

Paige, singing the title role in Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*, impressed American theatregoers with the power of her voice. New York critics yesterday talked of a "Sunset sensation" and an "impeccable performance" by the diminutive actress. "One can only hope she'll immigrate here permanently," David Stearns of *USA Today* said.

"Probably the most remarkable voice in the popular musical theatre today," added Clive Barnes of the *New York Post*.

Sir Andrew, who was in the audience, said afterwards that he was thrilled by Paige's singing and only wished that he had cast her from the start

of the show — from this a man who in the past has shattered the egos of leading ladies by telling them that they were not up to playing the part of the ageing Hollywood star Norma Desmond.

Members of the audience leaving the Minskoff theatre after Thursday's opening night could not get over Paige's performance. "Boy, that's some voice," one elderly woman said to her friend. "And did you see the size of the girl? It must be the British musical-hall tradition."

The show's spectacular sets had to be altered for the 5th Paige. The steps on the sweeping staircase were raised a good few inches to prevent her from vanishing behind the bannister.

Some 250 friends and family members travelled to New York to support her. "Knowing they were there made me a bit emotional when I came out on stage at the start, but it is

an emotional scene so that helped me," she said at the after-show party, where her 81-year-old mother, Irene, not to be outdone, gave an impromptu display of tap dancing.

Her octogenarian father, Eric Bickerstaff, a sometime drummer from Worthing, West Sussex, on his first trip to the United States, said: "I knew she could do it. I am very proud of her."

Paige's triumph coincides with a minor British boom on Broadway. The Royal National Theatre's Michael Gambon, who has also had trouble securing "landing permission" from the American actors' union, is making his Broadway debut in David Hare's play *Skylight*. He has

been previewed by one excitable local paper as "the greatest actor in the English language".

Arts, page 17



## Nurses quit over claims of abuse against elderly

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

TWO senior nurses resigned and five others have been suspended after allegations of abuse against elderly patients at a Glasgow hospital. An independent investigation is being launched into claims that patients were mentally abused, neglected and had belongings stolen while they were on a long-stay ward in the geriatric unit of Victoria Infirmary in Glasgow.

Barrie Small, chief executive of the Victoria Infirmary NHS trust, said that the results of an internal report were being passed to Greater Glasgow Health Board to enable it to conduct an inquiry. The suspended nurses face disciplinary hearings next week.

The senior nurse in charge of the geriatric ward resigned yesterday, two days after a staff nurse quit. Both are male.

The internal report revealed cruelty, racism and theft, possibly dating back two years, at the 32-bed North 4 Ward. Mike Watson, Glasgow Central MP, met the trust management yesterday to ask why the allegations had not come to light more quickly.

He said he believed that it was the fifth time since last year that he had visited the hospital because of complaints. At Christmas bodies were left in a corridor outside the overflowing mortuary. He said: "It is obviously a matter of great concern, particularly that nobody came forward within the existing structure of

the hospital to reveal what was going on."

The allegations include claims that one nurse, who has worked on the ward for two years, tormented a Jewish patient, refused to call a priest for a dying patient and forced a Sikh to eat meat until he was sick. There were also complaints that he sexually harassed staff and was intolerant of their religious beliefs.

He was alleged to have given a terminally ill patient oral medicine and refused to help when she choked. Patients' dressings were not changed and one patient was called Victor Meldrew, making him cry.

The suspicions of ill-treatment are thought to have emerged during investigations into allegations of financial irregularities on the ward, prompted by an anonymous phonecall. An internal inquiry was launched in June amid claims that the charge nurse had stolen money from patients for about two years.

But during interviews with 45 workers and former hospital employees a picture of wider abuse emerged. The main allegations relate to the two nurses who have resigned. The five suspended nurses are alleged to have known what was happening, but failed to raise the alarm.

Jim Devine, Unison regional organiser, called for an end to hospital "gagging orders" which prevented staff from making their concerns public.

## Lilley's staff complain of political pressure

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT  
WHITEHALL EDITOR

CIVIL servants at the Department of Social Security have made the highest number of complaints that ministers and political staff expect them to break their code of impartiality. It was claimed yesterday.

The charge was made by Jonathan Baume, deputy general secretary of the Association of First Division Civil Servants, who said: "Complaints have come from across departments, although the DSS stands out in particular as an area of difficulty."

Ministers at Peter Lilley's department were said to be surprised by the allegations. One source said: "We have a recognised complaints procedure and ministers are not aware that any complaints have been made under this. DSS ministers are punctilious in ensuring that the usual proprieties are observed."

A senior Conservative Party source said: "A lot of charges made by the FDA have proved to be unfounded and I expect these, too, will go the same way." Derek Foster, the shadow spokesman on civil service issues, called on the Prime Minister to set up an independent investigation to look into the allegations.

Similar complaints about Whitehall problems were denied before the summer recess. Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, told the Commons there was not a shred of evidence. Roger Freeman, the Chancellor of the Duchy and Public Service Minister, claimed that the FDA was pursuing a political agenda.

Mr Baume's allegations emerged during the TUC conference. He said: "Members have been instructed to prepare material for manifestos, alter reports to provide political slant, paint a picture of policy in an unbalanced way, support visits by Conservative Central Office, cost opposition policies to favour party argument, and more."

## Boy sees twin brother suffocate in corn pit

BY KATHRYN KNIGHT

A

BOY

watched helplessly as his identical twin suffocated to death after being sucked into a corn pit as they played at their parents' farm.

Benjamin

and Christopher Chambers, 8, were playing in a barn when Benjamin was sucked inside the pit as he looked for a wellington boot. The boys' parents, Ivor and Kim, rushed out after hearing Christopher's screams and struggled to free their son as he sank into the corn. Paramedics also tried to resuscitate Benjamin but he was pronounced dead at Leicester

Royal Infirmary. Paul Pugley, a firefighter who was the first to reach the remote farmhouse at Bagworth, Leicestershire, said that Benjamin had been sucked down as if he was standing in quicksand.

"Once the parents had located the position of the boy, they started to dig him out," he said. "His mother tried desperately to free the trapped youngster and his father used a tractor to remove corn. It was a real team effort but all to no avail."

John Glass, Ben's headteacher, said: "He was a very bright, happy and popular boy."

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Journalists followed rules of lobby briefing, but Byers was worried he had said too much

## Meal that left minister with a nasty aftertaste

A DINNER at the Seafood Restaurant in Blackpool on Wednesday night proved to be the dramatic finale of a strategy to convince voters that Labour would not be held to ransom by the unions if it should gain power.

Over Dover sole and mussels, Stephen Byers, a Labour employment spokesman, held forth with four political correspondents — Jon Hibbs from *The Daily Telegraph*, Roland Watson from *The Daily Express*, John Williams from *The Daily Mirror* and myself. He expanded on Labour thinking on a variety of issues, including the relationship between trade unions and the party.

The meal in the popular, packed restaurant, was convivial. A relaxed Mr Byers openly discussed policy matters on "lobby rules", which require political journalists to protect their sources.

Lobby journalists from rival newspapers often get together to take out a politician during the conference season and, while they can use the information given, the convention is that the source is not identified. Mr Byers knew he could be more indiscreet because he would not be publicly identified. We joked when a BBC correspondent, armed with tape recorder, entered the restaurant but we were tucked away out of microphone reach.

After claret and coffee the journalists shared the £180 bill



Jill Sherman, one of the reporters who dined with Labour's employment spokesman, describes how his name ended up in the news

— including tip — before piling into a cab with Mr Byers to the Pembroke Hotel and then going our separate ways. There was no huddling to compare notes.

Yesterday Mr Byers accused us of printing the "Booker Prize for fiction" after reports of the sensational story he had dropped into the conversation appeared in Friday's papers.

Mr Byers, a Blair loyalist and enthusiastic moderniser, is regarded as one of the high-flyers of the 1992 intake of MPs, moving rapidly from the

Whips' Office to the Employment Department. At the Trades Union Congress in Blackpool this week he made his awkward debut as a spin doctor.

Yesterday *The Times* led with a report that Labour intended to break the link with the trade unions if they provoked a spate of strikes after Labour was elected. This would be done by balloting the party membership before putting it to a conference vote.

Mr Byers, in accordance with lobby rules, was not named as the source of the report.

It was clear that the Labour leadership was considering the ultimate sanction — a severance of the historic link with the unions — as a threat to unions not to rock the boat. The conversation cannot be detailed without breaking lobby rules, but I stand by everything in that report.

Once spin-doctors were alerted by telephone calls that several papers were running a story about union links, they started issuing denials. These began at about 7pm, hours before they knew the substance of the reports. Mr Byers also issued a denial before the

first edition of *The Times* had been printed.

In a bizarre move, he broke lobby rules by admitting that he had had dinner with the four of us. At 8.45pm he put out a statement conceding that he was the source, but denied the reports. By then he had merely had read out to him the headline of *The Times*' first edition: "Blair ready to cut links with unions".

Yesterday morning the denials continued. Mr Byers had the onerous task of appearing on radio and television programmes all day. This morning he said the reports were "misleading" and "exaggerated". But by lunchtime he refused to rule out the possibility that the links would be broken in five years' time.

The denials and counter denials followed a familiar pattern. Earlier that week David Blunkett, the Shadow Employment Secretary and Mr Byers' boss, had been caught out in a similar process. On Sunday morning *The Sunday Times* carried a story — buried on page two — that Labour planned to introduce compulsory arbitration. Spin-doctors briefing on Sunday did not try to knock the story down. The trade unions gathered at the TUC conference were furious.

On Monday morning, Peter Hain, a Shadow Employment Minister, insisted that Labour was not talking about "compulsory arbitration" but "binding arbitration" on a



Stephen Byers yesterday, during his hectic round of radio and television appearances to defend himself

voluntary basis. The next day Mr Blunkett wrote an article in the *Evening Standard* spelling out proposals to force unions to hold second ballots if the employers put forward an improved offer.

John Monks, the TUC General Secretary, got hot under the collar at the idea of legislation.

On the lunchtime bulletins, Mr Blunkett denied he was considering laws for second ballots. But Tony Blair confused the issue when he arrived to address a private dinner in Blackpool, when he said Labour would not "rush

into legislation". Other party sources built up the story again that new laws were indeed on the agenda.

By now Mr Monks, a generally mild-mannered man who is a Blair ally, was furious about the conflicting reports and the renewed briefing that Labour would legislate.

On the luncheon bulletins, Mr Blunkett denied he was considering laws for second ballots. But Tony Blair confused the issue when he arrived to address a private dinner in Blackpool, when he said Labour would not "rush

was getting across the message it intended to wavering Tory voters: that it was no longer in hock to the trade union barons.

Wednesday night provided the icing on the cake, although some feel that Mr Byers went harder than Mr Blair would have liked. As we finished our coffee at the Seafood Restaurant, Mr Byers quipped: "I hope I haven't told you too much." By 9pm on Thursday night he probably realised that he had.

Leading article, page 21

## Influential Blairite struggles on the hook, but may yet break free

By ALICE THOMSON  
POLITICAL REPORTER

UNTIL Stephen Byers had his seafood dinner with four journalists in Blackpool, few people outside Westminster had ever heard of the Labour MP for Wallsend. John Prescott, the deputy Labour leader, described him yesterday as only "a junior employment spokesman".

His previous claim to fame was when he joined Peter Mandelson in shaving off his moustache last year, prompting fashion articles that facial hair was now unacceptable old Labour. But Mr Prescott knows that

Mr Byers is actually far more influential.

Since Tony Blair won the leadership election two years ago, the 43-year-old MP has become one of the leading bright young social democrats in the inner circle and has been at the forefront of the modernisation programme. The Labour leader sees him as one of the most industrious, probing, combative and effective MPs on the Opposition benches.

Although Mr Byers entered Parliament only at the last election, he was given a crucial role in the last reshuffle as spokesman on industrial relations and the social chapter. It

has put him in charge of two of the most contentious issues in the run-up to a general election. Mr Byers was busy early this year drawing up Labour's industrial policy document and, at the TUC conference, he was initially adept at smoothing over ruffles between the unions, his party and the media.

Friends hope that his comments over the Dover sole will not harm his prospects. Before this upset, they were convinced that if Labour won power, Mr Blair would reward Mr Byers with an influential post as the number two putting through controversial constitutional reforms. But

they are worried that he was uncharacteristically flustered on radio programmes yesterday and said it was unlike him to use words such as "ludicrous" and to attack journalists for being "prime candidates for the Booker Prize of fiction".

One of Mr Byers' closest colleagues is convinced that he will ride it out and benefit. He said: "He has the ability to turn everything to his advantage. I can't believe he will be penalised in the same way that Clare Short was for her gaffes on cannabis and tax."

Mr Byers, who went to a grammar school and became a senior lecturer

in law at Newcastle Polytechnic, has an impressive track record in local government and the unions. As an Education Minister, he clobbered his opponents during the Education Bill enacting opting out. He was also at the forefront of attacks on the Government's involvement in the arms-for-Iraq affair and was an effective whip.

He is usually adept with the press, knowing exactly which stories amuse them. He has enraged the union brotherhood, but whatever he said over supper may later be seen as the start of Mr Blair's most daring move to woo the voters.

Relations deteriorated further between the Labour party and trade union leaders over the next two days when the TUC backed calls for a £4.26 minimum wage and an extension of workers' rights beyond current Labour policy.

By now the headlines were playing well for the Labour leadership. Mr Blair was said to be "delighted" about the reports of his determination to distance Labour from the unions. He had been anxious all week to play to the wider electorate and was "relaxed" about the union fury. Labour



Blackpool restaurant where the dinner took place



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# Violent patient on the run from mental hospital

By RICHARD FORD  
HOME CORRESPONDENT

A PSYCHIATRIC patient with a history of violence was being hunted by police last night after escaping from a hospital secure unit.

Staff attempted to follow Daniel Reynolds, who has previous convictions for theft and threatening behaviour, but lost him as he fled from Kneeworth House hospital at Bassingbourn, Cambridgeshire, an independent psychiatric hospital for mentally ill adults.

Reynolds, 29, who has a distinctive tattoo of the rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix on the side of his head, escaped after being allowed into the grounds on Thursday night.

Police in Cambridgeshire last night warned the public not to approach the Scotzman, who has a serious mental illness, as he was likely to be violent. Police sources said that Reynolds had been violent in the past when approached.

Keith Drummond, director of the hospital, said that Reynolds had been allowed



Reynolds, dangerous if approached by public

only extremely limited access to the grounds of the hospital. "He was followed by staff but was able to evade them," he said.

Mr Drummond said that the hospital was concerned that Reynolds should be returned as quickly as possible to prevent any harm being done to the public or himself. "The decision to grant access was taken after extended assessment of the risks and was actioned strictly within our policies and procedures," he said. "Risks cannot be as-

essed in a scientific way and patients' actions do have to be assessed in realistic circumstances."

In October 1994 Christopher Smithson, 34, another patient with a history of violence, also absconded from the hospital. He was found 50 miles away in Kings Lynn, Norfolk. In November 1993, Kenneth Mullen went missing for the second time in three months. Three months earlier Jamil Jaffer, described as potentially dangerous, walked out of the hospital and was picked up the following day.

Reynolds's disappearance follows public alarm over the escape last month of Trevor Holland, a paedophile, while on a supervised visit to Chessington World of Adventures in Surrey. Mr Drummond, highlighting the dilemma facing medical staff treating psychiatric patients, said all psychiatric hospitals had rehabilitation programmes and that decisions to allow paedophiles to go on trips was based on a calculated assessment of the risks to the public against the potential benefits to patients.

## Ward rage threatens doctors

UNRULY patients complaining about waiting times and doctors' attitudes are causing one NHS trust that it has put the issue at the top of the agenda for its annual meeting on Monday.

Geoffrey Stocks, chairman of Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust, has castigated members of the public who abuse nurses and other hospital

tal workers. "This is very upsetting for our staff and is to be deplored," he writes in a foreword to his annual report.

"A number of patients and their friends feel it necessary to have rows about the way they are treated — ward rage as opposed to road rage."

A spokesman for Musgrave Park Hospital in Taunton said: "We do get disruptive patients and families on the

wards. That is upsetting to other patients and staff. It is part of the changing pattern of the type of some patients that we get in our hospitals."

The trust, which treated 63,000 patients last year, has received 115 complaints about the general standard of care and treatment. There were 63 written complaints about long waiting times for medical attention.

Workers toiled through the night this week to mount the 54ft telescope between large stone walls where it was erected in 1845 by the 3rd Earl of Rosse, a distinguished mathematics student at Trinity College Dublin and Oxford. The present Earl of

In London highlights of the pro-

gramme include the opening of the recently refurbished Marble Arch, containing for the occasion a photographic display, *Amazing Arch*; the entrance foyer, staircase and principal rooms of Sir George Gilbert Scott's former Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras railway station; the College of Arms in Queen Victoria Street; and a recently renovated Carmelite monastery in Kensington Church Street.

John Young, architectural partner of Lord (formerly Sir Richard) Rogers, is opening his high-tech home The Deck House in Rainville Road, Hammersmith, west London, today until 1pm.

The Slade School of Fine Art opens its building sculpture galleries, refurb-

ished by Fraser Brown McKenna, tomorrow morning with tours every 30 minutes.

Around the country star attractions include Aintree racecourse in Liverpool; the new custom-designed North

West Film Archive in Manchester; the National Monuments and Records Centre and the Renault Distribution Centre, used as a James Bond film set in *A View to a Kill*, in Swindon, Wiltshire; Cable and Wireless College, the company's training centre and winner of the Building of the Year Award 1994, in Coventry; the School of Jewellery in Birmingham; the Marble Hall, Norwich, designed by George Skipper in 1904 as offices for Norwich

Union; the Anderton Boat Lift in Cheshire; the Prince Consort's Library in Aldershot, Hampshire, by Captain Francis Fowke who also designed the Royal Albert Hall; and Eye Power Station in Suffolk, where electricity to heat 12,000 homes is generated from the droppings of 100,000 chickens.

Additional events are being organised at many of the properties. St Clements Church, East Thurrock, Essex, featured in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, will have performances by the St Clements Ladies clog dancers.

Further information is available by phoning 0891 800603 or by looking at the Heritage News Page on the web site (<http://www.rchme.gov.uk>).

## £12m plea to rescue the house that time forgot

By DALVA ALBERGE  
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A DECAYING stately home that has barely changed since the 18th century will lose its historic looks forever unless £12.7 million is raised by December.

The National Trust for Scotland has launched a desperate appeal for help, determined to prevent Newhailes, near Edinburgh, from being sold and stripped of its original decoration. A sale would mean that the walls decorated in the 1730s could be repainted and pictures dispersed to collectors around the world.

Sir Mark Dalrymple, the last baronet of Newhailes, died in 1976. His widow is distressed at having to sell the house, which was occupied by her husband's ancestors from 1707. Lady Dalrymple said: "Moving out will be a wrench, having lived here for 50 years."

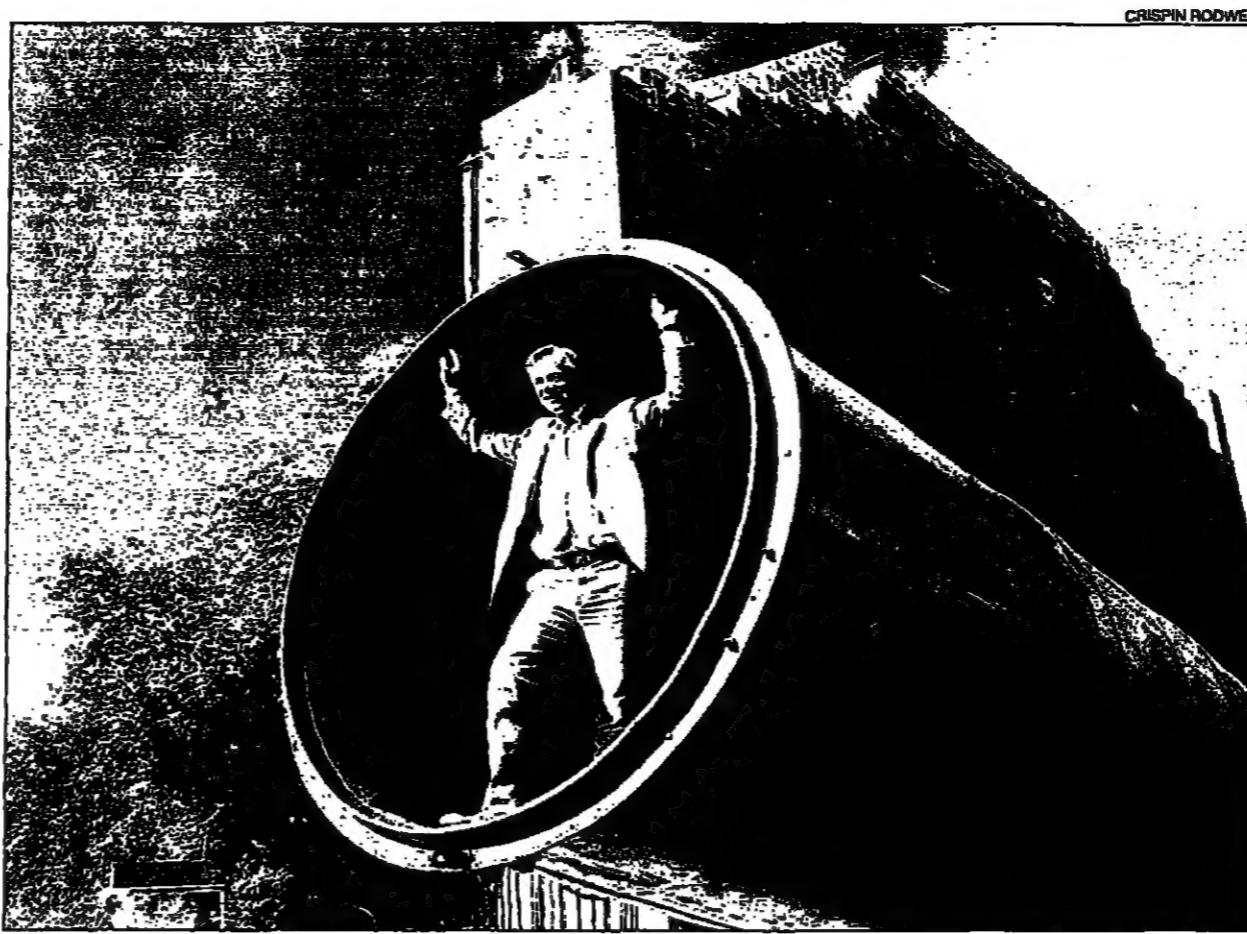
After years of struggling against dry rot and the elements, proofing it against the wind and weather, the trustees of Sir Mark's estate have decided to donate the house and its grounds to the National Trust for Scotland on condition that they raise £12.7 million for the contents and restoration. Otherwise, everything will be sold.

The NTS estimates that £3 million needs to be spent on restoration over the next three to five years. It would, for example, repair the exquisite Baroque plasterwork whose gilded seashells is a motif found throughout the house. It has fallen to pieces over the years: Lady Dalrymple collected them into piles, hoping they could be put back one day.

Carpets and curtains are badly frayed and layers of dust remain untouched in parts of the house. Some of the windows are cracked, the garden is overgrown and the stable is decaying.

The National Art Collections Fund, Britain's largest art charity, fears that the house and its magnificent art collection could be lost if the appeal fails. It has taken the unusual step of buying four portraits from the collection for £245,000.

The Dalrymple family included distinguished lawyers who served as judges, Lord Advocates and Secretaries of State. The house is believed to have been designed by William and John Adam, whose team of craftsmen appear in the accounts.



The Earl of Rosse with his restored Victorian telescope, the Leviathan of Parsonstown, at Birr Castle

## Telescope with view of the past

By NICHOLAS WATT  
CHIEF IRELAND  
CORRESPONDENT

A GIANT Victorian telescope has been restored and returned to its rightful place in the grounds of one of Ireland's finest castles nearly 90 years after it was dismantled.

The "Leviathan of Parsonstown", with which dramatic astronomical discoveries were made in the last century, will form the centrepiece of Ireland's new Historic Science Centre at Birr Castle, Co Offaly.

Workers toiled through the night this week to mount the 54ft telescope between large stone walls where it was erected in 1845 by the 3rd Earl of Rosse, a distinguished mathematics student at Trinity College Dublin and Oxford.

The telescope was made using the

telescope was the greatest and most powerful in the world in the last century. It was built at a cost of £30,000 and the telescope's mirror was made in foundries fired by turf from local bogs.

A complex system of pulleys and cables operated by a team of assistants directed the telescope to whichever part of the sky the ear wanted to observe from the eyepiece 60ft above ground. A similar system will

allow visitors to Birr Castle to enjoy the same views as the 3rd earl when the museum opens in 1998.

Important discoveries were made using the telescope, in spite of Ireland's inclement weather. Sir Bernard Lovell, the astronomer, wrote of the telescope: "Objects hitherto seen only as dim areas of light were resolved. The most famous is the case of an object known as the Whirlpool Galaxy. Lord Rosse's drawing of this clearly shows the spiral arrangements of the stars. He had discovered the spiral galaxies which are now

known to be similar to our own Milky Way."

The present Lord Rosse hailed the £1.2 million restoration of the telescope as the fulfilment of a lifetime's dream. "It really is a tremendous moment to have the Leviathan restored so that everyone can appreciate the achievement of the last century."

He added: "Ireland is amazingly dark and has little light pollution. The night skies are usually incredibly clear. So it was not crazy to erect a telescope in the middle of the bog."

The next hurdle for Lord Rosse is to raise money for a new mirror for the telescope. But he also has his eye on securing on loan the original mirror, which was acquired by the Science Museum in London in 1914.

## Hidden architectural treasures open the door to visitors

By ROBIN YOUNG



Marble Arch: mounting a photographic exhibition

THIS weekend 1,800 buildings normally closed to the public will open their doors, hoping to greet as many as one million visitors for a rare, and free, look round.

This is the third year that the Civic Trust and London Open House have co-ordinated such an opportunity to indulge public curiosity. This time some of the venues most in demand took advance reservations and several, such as Sandymount House in Richmond, west London, designed by the architect J.M.W. Turner for his own occupation, are fully booked.

In London highlights of the pro-

gramme include the opening of the recently refurbished Marble Arch, containing for the occasion a photographic display, *Amazing Arch*; the entrance foyer, staircase and principal rooms of Sir George Gilbert Scott's former Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras railway station; the College of Arms in Queen Victoria Street; and a recently renovated Carmelite monastery in Kensington Church Street.

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West Film Archive in Manchester; the National Monuments and Records Centre and the Renault Distribution Centre, used as a James Bond film set in *A View to a Kill*, in Swindon, Wiltshire; Cable and Wireless College, the company's training centre and winner of the Building of the Year Award 1994, in Coventry; the School of Jewellery in Birmingham; the Marble Hall, Norwich, designed by George Skipper in 1904 as offices for Norwich

Union; the Anderton Boat Lift in Cheshire; the Prince Consort's Library in Aldershot, Hampshire, by Captain Francis Fowke who also designed the Royal Albert Hall; and Eye Power Station in Suffolk, where electricity to heat 12,000 homes is generated from the droppings of 100,000 chickens.

Additional events are being organised at many of the properties. St Clements Church, East Thurrock, Essex, featured in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, will have performances by the St Clements Ladies clog dancers.

Further information is available by phoning 0891 800603 or by looking at the Heritage News Page on the web site (<http://www.rchme.gov.uk>).



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British Association: chips that can do everything, and the pressures of looking like a living doll

## Computer implant in brain gives sight to the blind

REPORTS BY NICK NUTTALL AND NIGEL HAWKES

A GROUP of blind people have had their sight partially restored by microchip implants in their brains, a researcher said yesterday. The chips have allowed the patients to see grainy images and outlines beamed to them from a camera.

Professor Peter Thomas, a British computing expert, said that the chip was put in the back of the head connected to the visual cortex by bio-engineers at Utah University. Speaking at the British Association meeting in Birmingham, he said that the team had been able to give blind people a rudimentary kind of vision, "like a grainy football score-board seen close up. They can see outlines of objects."

The sight research highlights how the personal computer, once a bulky device on an office desk, is becoming so small that it can be worn or slotted into parts of the body. Professor Thomas said that, within three decades, computers inside people's heads might be commonplace. They would provide people with undreamt-of forms of communication and computer-power memories.

They could, for instance, open a window in the brain for displaying visual information. But the first uses would be military, with troops dropped into a war zone carrying brain implants for communicating with base. Maps of the terrain could also be beamed in, allowing the soldier to navigate using links between his visual cortex and a string of satellites. The soldier would be able to travel light, without heavy communications equipment, and keep his hands free for firing weapons or for hand-to-hand combat.

Professor Thomas, of the computing department at the University of the West of England, said that there were scores of developments in the field. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers were trying to develop shoes that could pick up static electricity from carpets to power computer chips without the need for batteries.

He said that the forerunner of chips in the brain would be head-mounted displays — a small computer and cameras in goggles. The technology to aid mental power would end the embarrassment of forgetting someone's name or important information linked with social or business meetings.

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Professor Thomas said that the overall idea is that you carry all the computing power you need around on your body rather than in a bulky personal computer. Computers in the future will be fashion accessories with aesthetic designs."

As for chips in people's brains, Professor Thomas said that the barrier was not necessarily technical. "There are obviously medical, legal and ethical issues."

Leading article, page 21

would recognise a business contact using the camera and the computer memory, before calling up salient points about them. The head-mounted display could call up the last five subjects discussed with the person.

Professor Thomas said that simple wearable computers, disguised as watches and items of clothing such as ties and shirt collars, were already emerging. "They will become a fashion accessory. Philips in The Netherlands is developing musical T-shirts. They have circuits woven into the cloth and you have a headset. So one day you can wear your hip-hop shirt and another day your rap T-shirt," he said. The wired fabric was washable.

Professor Thomas said:

"The overall idea is that you carry all the computing power you need around on your body rather than in a bulky personal computer. Computers in the future will be fashion accessories with aesthetic designs."

As for chips in people's brains, Professor Thomas said that the barrier was not necessarily technical. "There are obviously medical, legal and ethical issues."

Leading article, page 21



Professor Tom McLeish, nicknamed Professor Slime, with the fluid plastic he has produced. His research, funded by the European Commission and oil companies, will pave the way to novel plastics with curious properties. The green fluid plastic requires less energy to manufacture than conventional plastic

## Ministers accused of dishonesty over funding



Sir Derek called for change of government

GOVERNMENT ministers were charged yesterday with "total ineptitude as well as dishonesty" over university funding.

Sir Derek Roberts, Provost of University College London, marked his accession to the presidency of the British Association for the Advancement of Science by launching a sharp attack on the Government, declaring that it was time for a change. "The present Government has been in power so long that it has become slovenly and thinks it can get away with anything," he said. "We have been governed so badly that almost anybody else deserves a chance."

He cited two examples of alleged ministerial dishonesty. The first came when the Prime Minister told the Commons that the universities had

nothing to complain about since spending on them had risen by 23 per cent in real terms in the past ten years. "This is sophistry," he said. "It's being economical with the truth. The reality is that, over the same time, the number of students has increased by 70 per cent."

The second was the decision forced upon the Education Department by the Treasury to cut £400 million out of university equipment budgets. The department had claimed that the cuts could be made by money from industry, a claim that Sir Derek said was "bloody ludicrous".

"You can't get private industry to pay for fume cupboards or for repairing laboratory benches," he said. "Private, the minister has admitted to me that it was a cock-up, but added that if I

expected him to admit that publicly I must be very naive."

Sir Derek, a former research director of GEC, said that the worst thing would be to allow Britain's glorious scientific history to affect the future. "The fact that we've had lots of Nobel prizes in the past doesn't mean we'll have any in the future. Let's have pride, by all means, but we have to get things right for the future, or we'll get an infinitely worse social and economic situation in the next 50 years."

Although he favoured a change of government, Sir Derek did not hold out much hope that it would make a big difference. "A Labour government probably couldn't spend any more on education and the universities. But the present Government is so tired I'd like to see a change."

## Fungi fight winged killers

FUNGI are promising a revolution in medicine and industry, with some offering powerful new ways of controlling insects that carry deadly diseases, including African river blindness and malaria.

Scientists said yesterday that they had found a group of fungi that, rather like cuckoos in the bird kingdom, took over the egg-laying system of insects, sterilising the females. Dr Stephen Moss, of Portsmouth University, said that a small but growing number of agricultural pests

were now being controlled by fungi without the need of environmentally harmful chemicals. One, Beauveria bassiana, is being used to control the Colorado potato beetle. Others were helping to control spittlebugs and aphids.

But Dr Moss told the meeting that controlling winged insects that carried deadly diseases by using contraceptive fungi was a new but tantalising field.

He said his team had found a little-studied group known as the Harpellae in

## If it can happen to Morgan Grenfell, it can happen to anyone.

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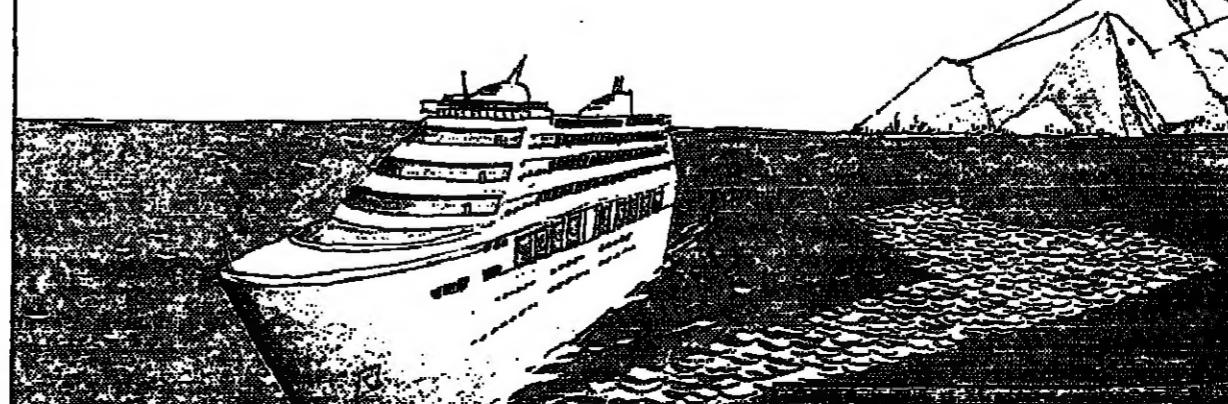
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## APPENDIX

**THE TIMES SATURDAY**

## WHICH FILM HAS WON THE CANNES FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS?

**FIAT EASIPLAN GOLD WITH 2 YEARS INSURANCE**

## ANSWER

# Vaccine price stops mass campaign to beat liver disease

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A CAMPAIGN to vaccinate every child against the potentially fatal liver disease hepatitis B could be launched if makers of the vaccine reduced the price, the Government's chief scientific adviser on the infection said yesterday.

Professor Jangu Banatvala, chairman of the Health Department's advisory group on hepatitis and Professor of Clinical Virology at St Thomas's Hospital, London, was responding to a call from leading virologists and liver experts to include hepatitis B in childhood vaccination.

One in 1,000 people in Britain are estimated to be carriers of the infection. The vaccine costs £5 per shot, putting the cost of a mass campaign between £20 and £30 million. In the United States, where mass vaccination is carried out, the vaccine costs \$1 (66p) per shot.

Three vaccinations are needed, the second given a month after the first and the third six months later. Many carriers do not know they are infected and the total could be up to 12 times higher than the estimate. Between 25 and 40 per cent will eventually die of cirrhosis or liver cancer but it can take 40 years to develop.

A spokesman for the manufacturer SmithKline Beecham said that bulk purchasing would make the vaccine cheaper. Professor Banatvala said the high cost of the vaccine and the relatively low level of infection in Britain compared with other countries made a mass vaccination programme difficult to justify.

Professor Zuckerman, a member of the World Health Organisation advisory group on viral diseases, added: "Over the past ten years there have been major demographic changes within the UK and an increase in foreign travel. This means that more individuals are at risk of contracting hepatitis B."

The panel members said the consequences of hepatitis B in children are far more serious than for adults, with an estimated 25 per cent of child cases proving fatal as a result of cirrhosis, liver cancer or acute liver failure.

The Health Department said that Britain had one of the lowest rates of hepatitis B in the world. "The Government's position is that we advise immunisation for people who are considered to be at increased risk. We are looking into the WHO proposals for universal childhood vaccination, but it is still under review."

Professor Aris Zuckerman, Dean of the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine in London and chairman of the

## IVF expert argues against age limit

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

LORD WINSTON, the leading fertility doctor, yesterday spoke against an inflexible age limit for women seeking such treatment.

While admitting he was "not keen" to promote in-vitro fertilisation for older women, Lord Winston did not see the value in setting "cut-off points" whether at 38 or 45 years. "One of the social issues facing us today is that as women take up career opportunities, broaden their horizons, so they leave reproduction until later in life," he said. "The sad thing is that when they ask for fertility treatment on the NHS, at say, the age of 40, they are told: 'No, you are too old.'"

Some might be readier for childbearing than others, he said. "I don't think it is appropriate to give treatment on demand, but I do believe you have to look at each person on the merits of their case."

Lord Winston, Professor of Fertility Studies at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith Hospital, west London, was addressing the European Congress of Perinatal Medicine, in Glasgow, during a heated debate on rights to assisted reproduction. He argued that in so far as any patient had an un-

conditional right to medical care from the NHS, that patient also had the right to fertility treatment. "In my view, the pain of infertility is as serious as any kind of pain, even though it might not be physical. So why single out assisted reproductive technology as the thing we would wish to penalise?"

Advances in IVF would soon make it possible to implant single embryos, reducing the risk of multiple births, which were mainly caused by other treatments such as fertility drugs, he claimed. He also argued that IVF treatment would eventually save the health service money.

But Professor Jean-Pierre Reiller, a neo-natalogist at a Paris hospital, argued that assisted reproductive technology was expensive and had led to a rise in the problems that he had long tried to reduce: premature delivery, infant mortality and low birth rate. The risk of multiple pregnancy and the possible need for selective abortion, which he called "ethically dubious", could also cause psychological problems. If all the babies were born, the family might be unable to cope. Such problems were "a great deal worse" than the pain of infertility, he said.

## Doctors are accused of failing the overweight

BY JEREMY LAURANCE  
HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

OVERWEIGHT patients are turning to irresponsible slimming clinics because GPs are not interested in them and have not kept pace with improved treatments, experts said yesterday.

Dr Nick Finer, consultant at the Centre for Obesity Research, Luton and Dunstable Hospital, said activities at some clinics had given drug

treatment of obesity a bad name: "They are just selling drugs. That is indefensible."

Dr Finer, speaking at the launch of an information centre by the Association for the Study of Obesity, said: "There are new drugs which suppress appetite but are not based on amphetamines and are not addictive. They must be part of an overall clinical strategy which includes changes to the diet and more exercise."

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The *Graf Spee* burns after scuttling in full view of British ships off Montevideo. The loss of the pocket battleship infuriated Hitler

## Binocular sale recalls hunt for *Graf Spee*

BY JOHN SHAW

WHEN Hans Langsdorff, captain of the *Admiral Graf Spee*, docked in Montevideo, his ship damaged in the Battle of the River Plate, he had no local currency to pay for essential electrical repairs.

Instead the captain gave his Zeiss binoculars to the electrician. Langsdorff had used them through the early months of the war when the pocket battleship's 11in guns sunk over 50,000 tons of British merchant shipping.

And he had used them when the Royal Navy dispatched Commodore Henry Harwood in command of *HMS Exeter*, a heavy cruiser, and two light cruisers, the *Ajax* and the *Achilles*, to hunt him down.

On December 13, 1939, 500 miles off Montevideo, the opponents made contact. German fire power from the *Exeter* but although outgunned, *Ajax* and *Achilles* continued the action. The *Graf Spee* was hit 20 times and ran for the neutral port.

Now the binoculars are to be sold at Christie's in London. They were bought from the electrician three years later by an Englishman and are expected to make £15,000 in November.

Langsdorff's dockside barter did him no good. With the Uruguayans denying him sanctuary, and with rumours of approaching British reinforcements, he put to sea. But only three miles out and in full view of the British, the

family, originally from Cheam, Surrey, was running a business in Buenos Aires.

Mrs Oakshott de Regusci, 74, who lives in Montevideo but has relatives in England, said yesterday: "Langsdorff must have had some idea at the time what the end would be to give away something as important as his binoculars."

"There is a long promenade here overlooking the river and I remember everybody went out to see what was happening when the *Graf Spee* left. There was great excitement. People on this side of the river supported the Allies but the other side supported the Axis."

"There was a recognition that Langsdorff was a considerate man. He wasn't a fanatic like some of them."

*Graf Spee* blew up. The crew had left before the scuttling but Langsdorff shot himself. The demise of the *Graf Spee* infuriated Hitler and it is believed that the captain overestimated the forces against

him. But with his strict code of military honour, Langsdorff could not contemplate the ignominy of surrender.

His binoculars were bought in 1943 by the father of Phyllis Oakshott de Regusci. Her

husband, originally from Cheam, Surrey, was running a business in Buenos Aires.

Mrs Oakshott de Regusci, 74, who lives in Montevideo but has relatives in England, said yesterday: "Langsdorff must have had some idea at the time what the end would be to give away something as important as his binoculars."

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## Labour 'shares values of Judaism'

By RUTH GLEDHILL AND ESTHER FOREMAN

TONY BLAIR has told Jewish leaders that the policies of the Labour Party are closely aligned to the values of the Jewish community.

The hostility between the party and a large section of the Jewish community was "behind us", the Labour leader told an audience including the Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, and the Israeli ambassador, Moshe Raviv. At a dinner organised by an educational charity, he said that Labour and Anglo-Jewry had in common the "desire to do better", matched by a commitment "to the collective good".

According to a report in yesterday's *Jewish Chronicle*, he acknowledged the Jewish contribution to society and said: "Its strength is in the values of family, education and welfare." □ Dr Sacks, delivering a *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4 to mark the Jewish New Year, paid tribute to Yitzhak Rabin, the late Prime Minister of Israel. "He shook hands with his former enemies, and began the long tough road to peace," he said. "He taught us courage in the pursuit of life."

## Anglicans are united by love of good fight

By RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Church of England is a quarrelling, batty family which nevertheless commands the loyalty of most of its members, according to a senior Church commentator today.

Behind its Gospel of peace and love, the Church is a hotbed of disputes ranging from rows in the cathedral close to feuds between neighbouring parishes which refuse to share a cleric because they were on different sides in the Civil War.

In *O Blest Communion*, Betty Saunders, a writer with the *Church Times* for 17 years, quotes a dean who says that there are other cathedrals as unhappy as Lincoln, which has been in turmoil since the exhibition of its Magna Carta in Australia lost £56,000. "Only," says the dean, "it hasn't leaked out." Mrs Saunders also describes how a woman pulled a gun on John Campbell, verger of Lincoln, in the vestry.

Peterborough Cathedral, traditionally a haven of Anglo-Catholicism, has been upset by the appointment of a "wild-

ly evangelical" dean. There was trouble at Salisbury between the cathedral authorities and the wife of the then bishop over a plan for a new road through the cathedral close.

The disputes in parishes are less public but equally intense, often centring on the 1980 Alternative Service Book (ASB), which most modern clergy prefer to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

In a Devon church, Mrs Saunders reports, a visitor threw the ASB at the churchwarden and "boomed out his preferred version of the service", while the congregation continued undaunted with theirs. Nobody complained because it was known that he had put a £20 note in the collection.

In other churches, war rages between nature lovers who insist that bats in the belfry must be protected and church cleaners driven to distraction by the resulting mess.

Other congregations have sex scandals to cope with as the issue of homosexuality surfaces repeatedly in the

General Synod and parishes and as clergy marriages break down at the rate of one a week, usually because of the husband's adultery.

As if all that is not enough, the charismatic revival known as the Toronto Blessing is sweeping the Church's evangelical wing, with people ripe for "slain in the Spirit" falling violently to the floor during services, laughing uncontrollably, howling and barking.

Mrs Saunders points out that more people go to Church of England services over the weekend than attend football matches and millions more visit churches as tourists. "The evidence is that the number of those who come looking for something — no one is quite sure what — is growing all the time," she writes.

The majority of the million-plus regular churchgoers are

more interested in their own parishes than the higher levels of the Church, she adds. "Most parishioners hardly ever think about the General Synod and its agenda. Their own agenda seems more immediate." She quotes a lifelong parishioner who said: "The Church of England is like your family, isn't it? Some of them may be batty — quite a lot of them are, actually. But it's still your family."

□ *O Blest Communion* (DLT £8.99)

At Your Service and Religious Events, Weekend page 15



Cause of dissent: the Toronto Blessing, a charismatic revival dividing the Church

## Credo

## Jewish New Year is a time to bless and celebrate life

Dr Jonathan Sacks

Six years ago, my family and I left home to take a sabbatical in Israel. We wanted a period of quiet before taking up the challenge of the Chief Rabbinate, so we went to Jerusalem in search of peace. Instead we found ourselves in the midst of the Gulf War.

Thirty-nine times during those anxious weeks the sirens sounded, and we knew a Scud missile attack was on the way. We put on our gas masks, in case the missiles contained chemical warheads. We went into our sealed room, and waited, and prayed. When the all-clear sounded, we emerged into the calm, thankful to be alive.

Often, when I read books of Jewish history, I wonder at the sheer tenacity of the people whose fate I share, their miraculous survival through the millennia. What was it that made generation after generation of Jews — so often scattered, powerless and persecuted — stay loyal to their faith, live by it and hand it on to their children as their most precious heritage?



Many great non-Jewish thinkers, among them Pascal, Nietzsche, Tolstoy and Berdyaev, were equally puzzled. What, asked Mark Twain, is the secret of Jewish immortality?

The best answer I have yet found is simply this: that Judaism is one of civilisation's most remarkable celebrations of life. Almost the whole of Jewish ritual consists in taking the simplest pleasures — eating, drinking, home, the family, study, debate, friendship and community — and investing them with sanctity, making a blessing over life itself. Never more so than on Rosh Hashanah, when we hear the siren of the ram's horn and turn to Heaven with one simple prayer: Write us in the book of life.

Some say the *shofar* is the sound of our sadness as we remember our missed chances for doing good. Others hear it as a cry to Heaven for divine mercy. One ancient tradition sees the *shofar* as a reminder of the horn of the ram Abraham offered when God told him not to sacrifice his son Isaac, because human life

□ Dr Jonathan Sacks is the Chief Rabbi

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BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 1996



Smiles at half-time: Nigel Potter, finance director of Wembley, left, Clas Hultman, chairman, centre, and Alan Coppin, chief executive

Strong first half for Wembley  
BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

WEMBLEY, which owns and operates Britain's most famous sporting complex, had a storming first half to the year with profits before tax reaching £7.7 million compared with a loss of £5.5 million in the same period last year.

Alan Coppin, chief executive, said the company was still optimistic about winning the battle with Manchester for £100 million of National Lottery funds to develop a new national stadium.

The company has outlined a £150 million plan that would see the old Wembley stadium replaced by a new state-of-the-art multisports stadium by the year 2000. A final decision is expected by the end of the year.

Turnover rose 24 per cent to £65 million. There is no dividend. The company said it wanted to continue improving its balance sheet.

The Wembley complex more than doubled operating profits to £7.7 million. The company said that the staging of the European Championships contributed less than £500,000 to profits.

Tempus, page 28

## London record as Wall St surges

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in London hit another record yesterday, catapulted higher by Wall Street which surged after a set of exceptionally good American inflation figures which allayed fears of higher interest rates.

News that US consumer prices rose by only 0.1 per cent in August added to Thursday's news of a 0.1 per cent fall in underlying producer prices and underlined the fact that American inflation remains extremely subdued.

There was also evidence that the economy's momentum may be slowing from a robust second-quarter performance with news yesterday that retail sales in America only rose by a modest 0.2 per cent in August.

Taken together, yesterday's figures made the case for an aggressive rise in US interest rates far less obvious.

As recently as the beginning

of last week, the markets had become convinced that the Federal Open Market Committee, which meets on September 24, will push up rates, perhaps by 0.5 per cent.

These certainties grew after Janet Yellen, a Fed governor who has the reputation of being growth oriented and dovish on inflation, gave warning that America was entering "the inflationary danger zone".

However, after this week's benign inflation figures, traders are beginning to think that the Fed may limit a rate rise to 0.25 per cent, or perhaps even postpone any monetary tightening until there are more concrete signs that inflationary pressures are building.

Lawrence Meyer, a Fed governor, told an American Economic Association conference yesterday that structural change in the economy could mean that unemployment

may now be able to fall further before inflationary pressures build. Speaking at the same conference, Joseph Stiglitz, chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisors, said that unemployment could fall even below current levels, the lowest for seven years, without a burst of inflation. He said inflationary pressures were not as great as people feared.

The easing of fears in the markets about American interest rates powered Wall Street to new highs and 30-year Treasury bonds jumped by more than a full point, pushing yields down below the 7 per cent level.

In early afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average was more than 80 points higher, having rallied by more than 50 points just after the opening in response to yesterday's statistics.

In Europe bonds surged in

sympathy with events across the Atlantic and British and German stock markets closed at new record highs. The FTSE 100 index ended 35.3 points higher at 3,967.9, nearly 75 points better on the week. Frankfurt's Dax 30 index closed 25.64 points higher at 2,995.9, very near to record highs reached during trading.

French shares also scored solid gains. There was news yesterday that French consumer prices dropped more sharply than expected in August. The annual inflation rate fell to between 1.6 and 1.7 per cent from 2.3 per cent in July, according to the official figures.

The German parliament yesterday approved three key Bills that ensure most of the spending cuts Bonn is seeking for next year to hit the Maastricht Treaty's deficit criteria for entry into a single currency.

## Imro rushes out unit trust review

BY GEORGE SIVELL

THE City watchdog investigating three Morgan Grenfell investment funds last night rushed out a review of the unit trust industry's investments in unquoted companies, an issue at the centre of the Morgan Grenfell affair.

Imro, the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation, discovered in an investigation launched this week that only 13 per cent of unit trusts show holdings in non-approved or unquoted securities.

The total value of unquoted securities averaged only 1.79 per cent of portfolios, Imro has found, and only 17 trusts reported holdings in pre-listed securities, another issue involved in the Morgan Grenfell affair.

Last night's figures were culled from 1,669 of the 1,677 authorised unit trusts. The rest

## IATA seeks £1m from Midland

BY JON ASHWORTH

MIDLAND BANK is being sued for up to £1 million in connection with a travel agent which collapsed six years ago, causing disruption to major carriers including British Airways. Letchford Tours & Travel of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, went into receivership in 1990, after banking hundreds of thousands of pounds in ticket receipts.

Midland acted as banker to American Airplan. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has initiated proceedings against Midland at the High Court in London, seeking to recoup up to £1 million in receipts. It is acting on behalf of 11 airlines, including British Airways, American Airlines, South African Airways, and Virgin Atlantic. If

the money is recovered from Midland, the carriers will receive payments pro rata.

Trevor Sears, senior partner of Booth & Blackwell, the London firm which acts for IATA, said proceedings had been initiated because the six-year limitation on cases was drawing near. A writ had been issued, but not yet served. He was hopeful that the situation could be resolved amicably.

Mr Sears said: "Monies paid for IATA airline tickets are trust monies, and are to be paid over to the airlines. We say the bank ought to disgorge them."

IATA is seeking the proceeds of sales in the six weeks to November 19, 1990, when receivers were appointed. Midland Bank said it would defend the proceedings vigorously.

## Woolwich slides in UBS league

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

THE Woolwich Building Society, which parted with its chief executive in spectacular circumstances earlier this year, suffered the biggest fall in the influential annual UBS survey of top twenty building societies. The Woolwich, whose chief executive Peter Robinson left after

UBS Major Players league table. According to the report, the Woolwich, which is planning to convert to a bank next year, continued to have high costs compared with its rivals. UBS said: "On standard efficiency measures, it performed worse than its main competitors, Halifax, Abbey National and Nationwide." Biggest climbers in the survey were the

Britannia rose to sixth position, while the West Bromwich rose to ninth — both growing by buying mortgage books.

The report has provoked a row between those societies keen to remain mutual and those planning to convert. The mutual societies claim the two types of organisation cannot be compared on a like-for-like basis.

Brussels launches Cadbury inquiry

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

CADBURY Schweppes's £620 million sale of its UK bottling interests came under threat last night after the European Commission announced it was launching a detailed investigation into the takeover.

The Commission said in a statement that it wanted to examine the impact of the sale of Coca-Cola Schweppes Beverages, which is jointly owned by Cadbury and the Coca-Cola Company, to Coca-Cola Enterprises, the US bottling company. It has enabled the company to halve its debt burden to about £700 million.

Cadbury described the decision last night as "unexpected". The company said it would make further comment when it had digested the document but added that it felt part of the reason for the continued investigation was that the Commission had insufficient time to gather full information over the summer.

Cadbury agreed to sell its 51 per cent stake in Coca-Cola Schweppes Beverages to Coca-Cola Enterprises in June. Coca-Cola Enterprises, which is 44 per cent owned by the Coca-Cola company, also agreed to purchase the Coca-Cola company's stake.

The Commission's decision to open the second stage of a competition investigation implicitly implies that it has serious reservations about the consequences of a commercial deal. The Commission examines about 30 cases a year at this level, although very few deals are completely blocked.

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Bank of Ireland Mortgages



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## The benefits for business of going green

When economists talk about "green budgets" they are usually referring to predictions of what the Chancellor will have in store for us in November. But if the figures produced last month by the Office for National Statistics are taken on board, green budgets could soon have an exclusively environmental meaning.

The ONS measured the impact of economic activity on the environment and natural resources, focusing on three areas: the cost of depleting North Sea oil and gas reserves, the atmospheric emissions of various industrial sectors and the amounts spent on cleaner technology. The research showed that electricity generation in 1993 contributed 1.5 per cent of GDP but produced 25 per cent of greenhouse gases and 44 per cent of acid rain.

The initiative was broadly welcomed in principle, but opinion differed over the practicalities. Is it possible to attach a monetary value to environmental degradation? Should such statistics be incorporated within GDP calculations?

tions or published alongside them?

ONS officials concluded that, while they had taken the first steps towards linking the national accounts with environmental concerns, devising a single "green" measure of GDP required "political judgments" to be made.

Absolutely right. But this is something for the longer term. Until we have a more environmentally conscious business culture, debating the ins and outs of green accounting on such a large scale is really putting the cart before the horse.

Most companies in the UK comply with environmental legislation; some are already going beyond the requirements of the law. Generally, however, we still lag behind our competitors in the US and Scandinavia in fostering environmental reporting and encouraging sustainability.

We need to make businesses more receptive to green ideas. The way to do this is to appeal to companies' self-interest — to prove that green business is good business. As consumers seem increasingly intolerant of firms with less than spotless

environmental records, this can only continue to become an even bigger factor in determining competitive advantage.

Commercial regulations should also incentivise environmentally responsible behaviour. Rather than burdening business with additional red tape, environmental legislation must prompt fresh enterprise.

One issue we might start to address is that of contaminated land. Government could initiate a process whereby property developers paid for the assessment of a contaminated site and received a certification based on its condition. Subsequent clean-up measures could be recognised and the land awarded a more favourable grade. With a line drawn under previous use of the site and future liability restricted to the last certificate issued, a developer could then sell this improved land, perhaps buoyed by capital gains or corporate tax exemptions.

As the landfill tax coming into force next month demonstrates, disposing of waste ecologically is as much a vital issue as preventing the degradation of existing natural resources. Although the tax rate — at £2 a tonne for inert waste and £7 for active waste — is perhaps not as radical as one might have hoped, if we are at all serious about tackling the problem of waste, that rate should be increased progressively each year.

At the Co-operative Bank we have realised the importance of this issue, making it central to our four-point

Ecology Mission Statement to promote environmental efficiency and sustainability. Aware that environmental criteria need to become part of our day-to-day decision-making, we have commissioned the National Centre for Business and Ecology to do a comprehensive environmental audit, which I'm sure will highlight areas for improvement.

As the financial suppliers of new businesses, banks have a role to play in "greening up", though a survey of the 17 financial institutions in the FT-SE 100 found that only two produced a detailed environmental report, while a further four mentioned the environment in their annual report.

Should we be surprised by this? Probably not. But it is worrying when you reflect that managing environmental risk, becoming a significant factor in lending decisions. If banks fail to take a lead on this, can we really expect other companies to follow?

The Co-operative Bank is committed to environmental best practice, having contributed £1 million to set

up the National Centre for Business and Ecology, which aims to provide an environmental service for the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector. Though vital to the UK economy, SMEs rarely have any environmental expertise and often feel the regulatory pinch. Research carried out by the bank suggests that 40-60 per cent of these firms have experienced pressures on their business on environmental matters.

It is up to politicians and business leaders to raise awareness of the benefits of "going green". The example of a group in Sweden called The Natural Step is instructive. It has secured the support of scientists and business people for a programme to reduce waste and increase resource efficiency. A similar exercise in "capacity building" would be valuable in Britain.

Business ecology must be seen as an opportunity, not a threat. It represents the sea-change in business values since the 1980s and the way ahead for the next century. Once business culture and the tax system reflect the principles of green business, it will be much easier to calculate and appreciate "green GDP".

□ The author is managing director of The Co-operative Bank

## Samsung poised with rescue deal for Fokker

By OLIVER AUGUST

SAMSUNG, the South Korean industrial group, is set to buy Fokker, the Dutch aircraft builder that is in receivership. The move would save 300 jobs at Shorts of Belfast, which produces wings for Fokker's planes.

The court-appointed receivers of the bankrupt Dutch planemaker said yesterday that they are locked in sales negotiations with Samsung on an exclusive basis.

Samsung Aerospace Industries has completed a business plan for Fokker and is conducting an audit of the company. The central issue in the negotiations is whether all parties concerned, including the Dutch Government, banks, receivers and Stork, the Dutch company that bought Fokker's service division, will agree to their roles as defined in the business plan.

In a brief statement, Fokker said: "The focal point of this probe is the question whether all parties involved can agree with a business plan currently being finalised by Samsung."

Samsung has had takeover talks on two earlier occasions, one before Fokker's collapse and one immediately after.

The profitable maintenance and services arms, Fokker Aviation, were sold to Stork.

the engineering equipment maker. In July, Stork agreed that it would sell back these parts of Fokker if the survival of the core aircraft manufacturing unit depended on it.

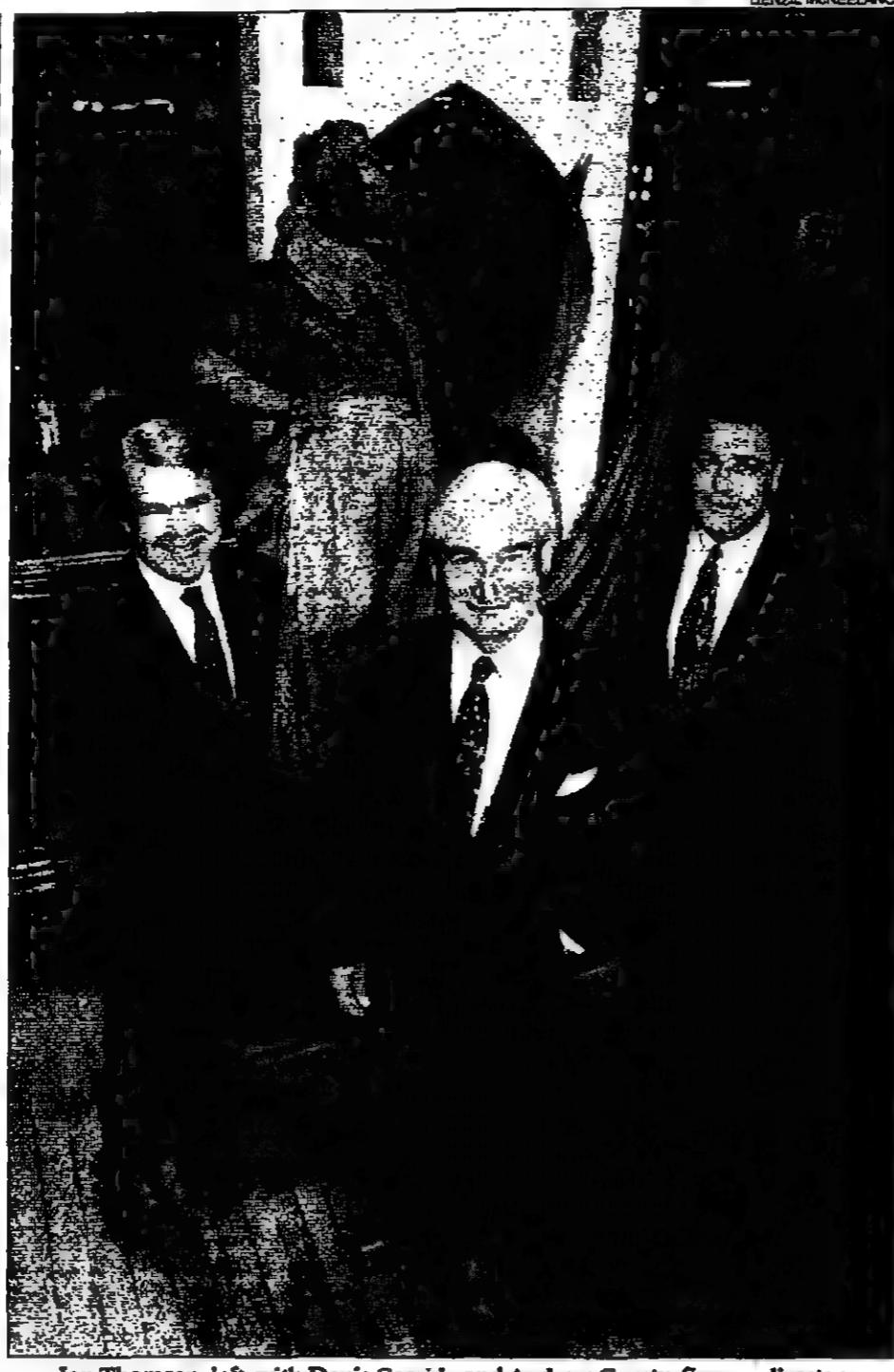
Fokker was declared bankrupt on March 15 after Dasa, the German parent company, cut a cash lifeline. This resulted in the loss of 700 jobs at Shorts, which manufactures the wings for the Fokker 70 planes.

Shorts is now producing the wings for seven Fokker-70s, which will be the last planes to be produced unless a buyer can be found.

On its Fokker 70 production line Shorts is employing 300 people who, the company said, will be kept on after the end of this year only if the continued production of the 70-seater can be secured.

However, some of the job losses at Shorts may be offset by an increase in the workforce in other parts of the business arising from orders for new medium-sized executive jets, for which Shorts is supplying components.

Bombardier, the parent company of Shorts, announced the first 50 orders for the new Global Express jet last month which should create 450 jobs in the next 18 months.



Ian Thomson, left, with Denis Cassidy and Andrew Garety, finance director

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## Warburs replaced at HoF

By CLARE STEWART

SBC WARBURG has been sacked as adviser by House of Fraser, the retail group, which has appointed Merrill Lynch in its place. It is also bringing in US corporate brokers.

A spokesman denied any suggestion of a rift between the struggling department store group and Warburs: "It is time for a change. Warburs were appointed in 1993 before House of Fraser's float."

The group which includes Army & Navy stores and Dickins & Jones has had a bumpy ride this year. After a profit warning in January, the group said 1995 profits had halved to £14.3 million. Andrew Jennings was ousted as chief executive in March and replaced by John Coleman, former Texas Homecare chief.

The City's disenchantment is reflected in the share price. It hit a low this year of 160p, 20p below the 1993 flotation price of 180p. The shares yesterday gained 11p to 173p. The interim results next month are expected to show an increased loss of about £6 million.

## National Savings close to £3bn target for this year

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL SAVINGS has contributed more than £2.6 billion to the Government in the first five months of the current financial year, compared with about £1 billion at the same stage a year ago.

Backed by more competitive rates than last year, the organisation is already close to this year's £3 billion target.

However, a National Savings spokeswoman said that the organisation needed to be well ahead this year because of the large number of savings

products that are due to mature.

The 36th issue of savings certificates, with an expected value of £3.28 billion, as well as Series C capital bonds, totalling £772 million, are both approaching maturity.

National Savings would normally expect between 65 and 75 per cent of the money to be reinvested, but this is always uncertain.

In August gross sales of all National Savings schemes amounted to £833 million. Taking away repayments and

accrued interest, the net contribution to the Government's financing needs was £393 million.

The most successful current product is Pensioner Bonds, generating a monthly income for those aged 60 or over, which brought in £183 million. Premium Bonds, which have been enjoying a renaissance, attracted £141 million.

At the end of August, the total amount invested in National Savings was nearly £59.6 billion.

## Water deadline extended

THE Department of Trade and Industry has extended the deadline for an inquiry by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission into a hostile bid by two French-owned water companies for Mid Kent Holdings.

SAUR and General Utilities (GU) must now wait a further ten weeks to discover the

outcome of their £75 million takeover plan.

If successful, Mid Kent will be split and its water supplies and resources shared between the two companies. The MMC's decision is now expected by December 9.

The emphasis of their proposal has been the "optimising" of water supplies in

the South East, which has been badly affected by drought over recent summers.

SAUR, owned by Bouygues, a French conglomerate, operates South East Water and holds a 14.5 per cent stake in Mid Kent GU, a subsidiary of Générale des Eaux, runs Folkestone and Dover Water and owns 24.3 per cent.

## Alan Paul directors 'deceived banks'

By A CORRESPONDENT

THREE former directors of Alan Paul, the failed chain of hairdressing salons, were behind a £7.37 million fraud on banks in the UK and Switzerland, Liverpool Crown Court heard yesterday.

It was the company's "avaricious need for income and profit" that led to the plot to deceive UK banks, Timothy King QC, for the prosecution, said.

Alan Moss, 47, the chairman and chief executive of Alan Paul, from Liverpool; Michael Rowland, 37, a managing director;

from Willaston; and Leslie Muse, 49, the franchise director, of Parkgate, Wirral, have pleaded guilty to conspiring to defraud banks and lending institutions.

James Mccluskey, 30, a self-employed financial adviser, of Cheshire, and Karen Walker, 32, of Liverpool, pleaded guilty to a similar conspiracy charge.

In 1994 Alan Paul, then a limited company, had no more than 11 salons but in the 1990s it acquired 250 in-store salons from Essoanees for £8.54 million. In

order to maintain momentum the company needed more funds. Mr King said

and the primary source of income and profit was made in franchising sales. Lies were told about contributions allegedly made by franchisees, so banks effectively made 100 per cent loans that went to Alan Paul, Mr King said. The domestic banks' loaned £3.75 million of which the alleged contribution from the applicant but never made was £930,000.

Mr Moss has also pleaded guilty to conspiring to defraud those who underwrote and subscribed to a successful £15.83 share rights issue by Alan Paul in July 1991. The case continues.

## TOURIST RATES

Bank  
Buyers

Bank  
Sellers

Australia \$ 2.05 1.89

Austria Sch 1.92 1.88

Belgium Fr 51.45 47.15

Canada \$ 2.229 2.079

Cyprus Cyp 0.758 0.703

Denmark Kr 5.24 4.78

Finland Mkr 7.65 7.23

France Fr 8.45 7.78

Germany DM 0.51 0.45

Greece Dr 3.95 3.65

Hong Kong \$ 12.95 11.95

Iceland Kr 115 95

Ireland P 1.02 0.95

Iraq Dkr 2.52 2.27

Italy Lira 2.007 1.87

Japan Yen 186.40 165.40

Malta L 0.602 0.547

New Zealand \$ 2.20 1.98

Norway Kr 1.23 1.16

Portugal Esc 10.63 9.23

S. Africa Rand 7.25 6.75

Spain Pes 202.00 189.00

Sweden Kr 11.02 10.22

Switzerland Fr 2.08 1.92

UK £ 140.750 132.750

USA \$ 1.32 1.25

Yugoslavia D 1.00 0.95

Yuan Cny 8.00 7.50

Yuan Cny

## A WORKING WEEK FOR: DANIEL HODSON

## Airborne in the busy world of futures

**Sarah Cunningham finds the head of Liffe ready for the exchange's move into the fresh territory of commodities**

Monday
Tuesday
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Friday

Commodities Exchange. It will be another feather in the cap for Daniel Hodson, chief executive of Liffe, and will take daily turnover at Liffe over an astonishing £100 billion per day.

For Hodson, 52, Monday will begin, much like any other working day, extremely early. If he denies being a fully fledged workaholic, he admits to coming close, setting off from his Sussex home early enough to start work by 7am.

For him, the significance of Monday's merger with the LCE is not the growth in size — which will only be marginal, as the LCE's volumes average only 2.4 per cent of those of Liffe — but the chance to expand Liffe into the virgin territory of commodities. He agrees that Liffe is not the easiest of institutions for the general public to understand.

The exchange's turnover is dauntingly large and the financial instruments traded — such as euro-options and long gilt serial options — largely incomprehensible to anyone outside the world of finance. Moreover, the method of trading, using a combination of high-tech wizardry and the hand-waving and bellowing of open outcry, is frankly bemusing. One thing he finds irritating is that when the London stock market falls, TV news producers often use footage of Liffe's trading floor, which is more visually stimulating than rows of equities salesmen sitting in bank trading rooms at terminals.

One advantage of the merger with the LCE will be that its business, trading futures and options on such everyday commodities as cocoa and coffee, will make the public feel more comfortable with the frantic activity of the brightly blazered, mainly young traders who work in Liffe's pits.

An important part of Hodson's job, and one that he enjoys, is to persuade people that derivatives are a good thing. City scandals, notably the collapse of Barings, can

make that difficult. "The public perception outside the industry itself was tarnished [by Barings], which was unfortunate," he says. "It was not a big setback for Liffe as a business. In the financial sector and the commercial sector, the press universally, and to their credit, never said using derivatives is a bad thing. This is exactly the opposite of what happened in America where there were big firms like Kodak saying we are never going to use derivatives again."

To rebuild the industry's public image, he likes to emphasise the role that derivatives play in things like pension fund management. He points out: "The reason you can get a fixed-rate mortgage is that the providers can lay off the risks at exchanges like this."

Liffe was not directly involved in the Barings debacle, but when news of it first broke, Hodson, like many others in the City, experienced a few moments of pure fear. "I was at my older daughter Susannah's confirmation," he recalls. On reading the first Sunday newspaper report, he grabbed a phone: "I was able to get hold of the chief executive of the clearing house within nanoseconds to see what the overall position in London was and he was able to reassure me that it was nothing of any significance, but that the problems were in Singapore and Japan."

With hindsight, he

seems to have enjoyed the excitement of the immediate aftermath of the collapse. His role was mainly acting as a communication channel between the regulators in the UK and the markets and regulators in America: "Communication was very important to prevent rumours, counter-rumours, concerns."

"I was a minor player but one of the interesting things about this job is that you are in the arena and you do have a view of what is going on in the City."

Before joining Liffe, Hodson, who was educated at Eton and Oxford before starting his career in banking, was finance director of Nationwide Building Society. When the Liffe job came up four years ago, he was attracted to it because "it was technical, involved managing people and trying to best optimise a very interesting and diverse group of people".

The job has proved to be as

complex as he first imagined: "We have all the problems and challenges you find in a conventional business, but we are also a regulator and one of the half dozen key institutions in the City. We also have a very high international profile, as we are the second or third biggest exchange of our type in the world." The other two big exchanges are in the Chicago Board of Trade — unquestionably the largest — and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Working for an exchange that is

owned and used by the members brings its own problems. "I am responsible to the board and we have a structure that is not so different from a regular business.

But we have 200 shareholders who

are physically here, and they take a

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views, we are paid to make planning assumptions. The planning assumption we make is that EMU will happen, and that while sterling is more likely to be out than in, it may be in. We must be prepared for that too."

Hodson and his colleagues must also ensure that particularly in the important bond futures and options market, Frankfurt never gets an edge. The fact that, financially, London is the European capital is key. But he is also convinced that trading by open outcry is Liffe's main advantage.

With electronics markets "it is

impossible to get the sound and the

feel and the smell in the same way".

Also, he says: "When markets change violently in one direction or the other, electronically one side of the market tends to disappear. In an open outcry market, with 150 people standing round, you can always get a price." In the long run,

electronics are bound to get better and, within a decade, he expects to see a "virtual reality" market in operation, with virtual trading pits.

Work does not consume all of Hodson's energy. "I regard myself very much as a family man. My two main interests in life are my family and my job and when I'm not here, I'm there," he says.

He has two daughters at boarding school: Susannah, 16, and Emma, 14. "Seeing them is an important part of my life," he says, but adds with a hint of regret: "The demands of the job are such that you can turn into a 100 per cent workaholic. I don't quite achieve that, but there are long hours and it is quite compulsive."

With his daughters usually away

at school, he and his wife Diana

live in Sussex in a small 350-year-old manor house on the South Downs. Commuting is not something he resents: "Being on the

train and having an hour to myself where I can do work uninterrupted is a great bonus."

Beyond his work and family, he admits he has little time left for diversions: "It is sad in a way, but I used to sing quite a bit in choral societies. Music and opera are interests. I also have a lovely garden; I'd like to spend more time gardening." Much time with his family is spent in the holiday house in Greece that he and his wife had built. He is never away long, though, and, in spite of the occasional traumas of his job, he always returns to London with enthusiasm.

"Over the years, we have moved

from Liffe taking off as a DC3 in

1982 and we're now talking about

something which resembles a

stretched 747A, with all the differ-

ence in technology, but we've never

landed. It keeps a lot of people

extremely busy."

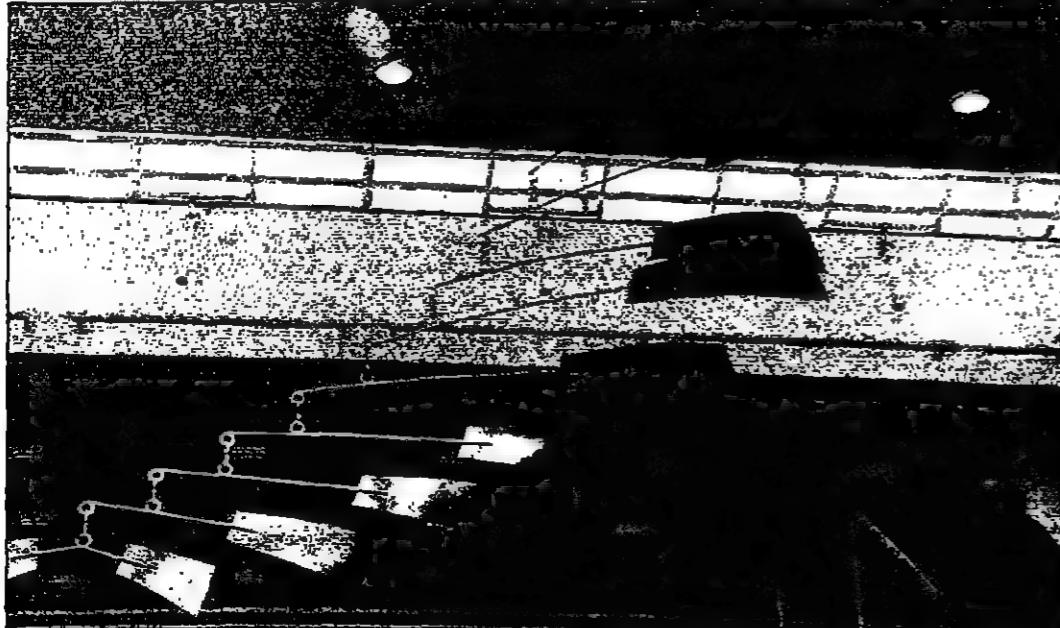


Daniel Hodson believes that Liffe's "open outcry" trading — with the hand-waving and bellowing of staff in colourful blazers — is not without its advantages

**• The assumption we make is EMU is going to happen •**

## HIDDEN ASSETS

### Mobile way to keep the staff seeking inspiration



Upwardly mobile: Big Blue draws admiring and wondering glances from British Telecom staff

**B**ritish Telecom sees itself as a shining proponent of what it calls "Work Style 2000", a management style which involves putting its people in light, spacious and attractive environments, and encouraging them to talk to each other — about telephonic matters, mind you — while deriving inspiration from their surroundings.

BT employees at the company's Stockley Park offices north of Heathrow must feel rather as if they are working in the Tate Gallery. Take lunchtime in the cafeteria, for example. Unlike most corporate cafeterias, where employees sit hunched over their sandwiches, BT employees are to be found eyes raised heavenward, gazing up in wonder at a vast steel and aluminium mobile circling overhead.

A few soup-spotted ties are a small price to pay for this ingenious piece of artistic engineering, commissioned by BT through Art Contact, the art consultants based

in Rickett Street, southwest London. The piece, titled *Big Blue*, is the handwork of Simon Lofting, the young British artist and a recent graduate of the Three Dimensional Design course at Ravensbourne College, Kent, and of Middlesex University's Fine Arts degree course.

To those who haven't seen a mobile since they were last nappy-clad in a cot, *Big Blue* looks half like the skeletal wing of a prehistoric bird and half like a series of coat-hangers strung perilously together and balanced in the middle by a giant grapefruit. In fact the mobile, or "mobile sculpture" as we should call it, has far more profound and glamorous antecedents.

"It is a model of the co-operation between different elements and opposing forces," says Lofting. "allowing infinite variations of position within fixed parameters. There is unity through balance ... This is 'freeform precision engineering', as Lofting calls it. You can't force balance, you have to find it. It's not like conquering a block of stone. Balance and equilibrium are obviously crucial to the piece. If you took away one part of the sculpture, the whole thing would collapse."

Lofting was given a fairly detailed brief by British Telecom. "The piece had to reflect the green belt location of the office and to give an impression of the positive and progressive nature of the company."

"I had an image of model teamwork and networks in my mind while I was making it. It provides a relaxed focus to a central point in the building and it is both sensitive and responsive to the environment. It reflects air currents and watching it is a bit like watching waves or trees in the breeze. As such, it has a therapeutic value."

Lofting has been fascinated by mobiles and kites for many years but has been making large-scale mobiles since 1992, having studied the works of Alexander Calder, the man credited with the invention of the mobile in the late 1930s. BT had decided that it wanted a large mobile to fill the space created by the double-storey atrium above its cafeteria.

Lofting's creation was chosen largely for its delicacy, its open "no tricks honesty" and its sensitivity to the environment. "We have a preference in BT to use the work of emerging artistic talent, rather than to invest in established names," says Malcolm Brown of BT's design unit. "We are delighted with the results. The mobile has great poise and adds a central focus for the building."

## Forecast for London. Showers.

The New Arrivals Lounge at Heathrow.  UNITED AIRLINES

## STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

# London shares reach record heights again

THE London stock market stepped up its assault on the 4,000 level with a concerted effort that saw share prices close at yet another record high.

The FT-SE 100 index had opened on a firm note, reflecting a 17-point rise in the Dow Jones industrial average overnight. But the real thrust came later in the day, bringing it within 30 points of its target before finishing 35.3 points up at a record 3,967.9. That stretches the lead on the week to almost 75 points.

London was again bolstered by Wall Street where investors were quick to respond to the latest retail sales numbers. The 0.2 per cent rise in August was less than many of them had anticipated and takes away much of the pressure for a rise in US interest rates.

Last night brokers were urging clients to hang on for the ride. They said stock shortages would continue to result in share prices being driven higher. By the close of business less than 700 million shares had changed hands.

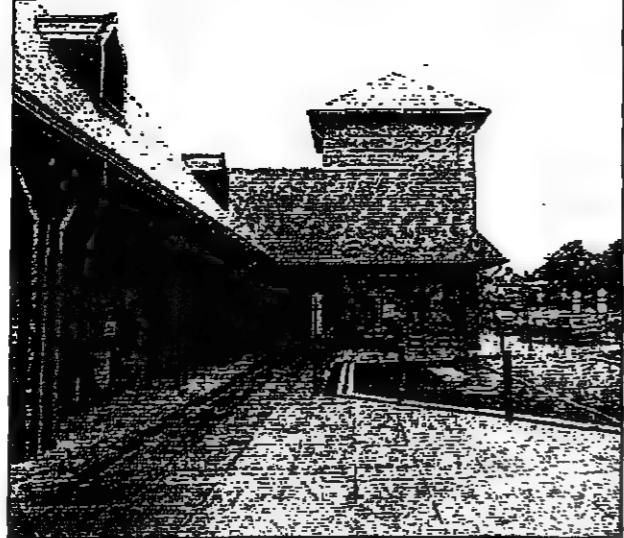
The food retailers moved against the trend, continuing to lose ground as the food price war designed to grab market share in the run-up to Christmas gathered pace. Sainsbury, down 4p at 362.4p, has been advertising price cuts in the press this week. It follows similar moves by Asda, 1p lighter at 105p, and Tesco, down 5p at 306p, before interim figures next week.

British Aerospace continued to respond to this week's profits news with a rise of 1p at £10.62p. The engineering team at Panmure Gordon, the broker, says that even taking a conservative approach to prospects the shares are worth £11.50. This in turn drove Rolls-Royce 8p higher at 243p.

Panmure also likes FKI, unchanged at 205p, which has put Babcock International, 1p lighter at 76p, and British Steel, 24p steeper at 193p, on its weekly sell list.

Railtrack continues to go from strength to strength, closing 3½p dearer at another new high of 288p on turnover of nine million shares. Institutional investors have been attracted by talk of the group's hidden property assets. SBC Warburg, the broker, is said to be a buyer of the shares, which were floated in the summer at 190p.

Whitbread fell 6p to 700p as



Tesco, which reports next week, was down 5p to 306p

Salomon Brothers, the US securities house, urged clients to switch into Scottish & Newcastle, 2½p better at 680p. The banks extended this week's gains, prompted by a number of brokers' recommendations. Barclays added a further 4p to 946p, HSBC 25p to 111.89, Lloyds TSB 7p to 391p, Standard Chartered 7½p to 703p, and Abbey

group was in talks that might lead to a bid. Last month at the annual meeting he denied bid speculation, saying the company was not in talks with anyone. The company is currently valued at £94 million.

Meanwhile, Old English Pub, which is listed on the Alternative Investment Market, is spending almost £3 million on five more pub restaurants and hotels. The shares rose 8p to 154p.

Matthew Clark, the drinks group, showed signs of bottoming out, ending 2½p higher at 365p. But the shares are still nursing a fall of more than 300p on the week after issuing a warning that sales had been hit by competition from "alcopops".

Stanley Leisure was boosted by a bullish statement at the annual meeting about current trading. The shares rose 4p to 495½p.

A four-fold increase in first-half profits to £1 million and growing confidence by the new management about the future lifted Liberty 15p to 435p in a thin market. The shares are now trading at their highest level for three years.

Brokers say the group is benefiting from cost cutting and restructuring measures taken earlier.

■ **GILT-EDGED:** London outperformed other overseas bond markets, with prices at the longer end recovering from a subdued start to close with gains stretching to more than a full point.

The smaller than expected rise in US retail sales was warmly received and provided the main thrust to bond prices now that the need for a rise in American interest rates appears to have passed.

Sales of the remaining tranches of index-linked stock were supplied and further issues can be expected by the Bank of England next week.

The December series of the Long Gilt jumped 1½p to finish at 107½p as the number of contracts completed soared to 79,000. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 also rose 1½p to 99½p, while at the shorter end, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was 4½p better at 103½p.

■ **NEW YORK:** The Dow Jones industrial average moved into record territory. At midday, it was up 71.76 points to 5,643.70, smashing the record 5,796.1 intra-day high set on May 23.

## MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	5,643.70 (+71.76)
S&P Composite	1,603.50 (+4.37)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	2,084.24 (+79.87)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	11,360.04 (+117.32)
Amsterdam:	
Euro Index	564.15 (+1.15)
Sydney:	
ASX	2,252.3 (+15.7)
Frankfurt:	
ax	2,995.96 (+25.04)
Singapore:	
Straits	2,126.27 (+40.8)
Brussels:	
General	957.14 (+22.23)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2,080.37 (+15.00)
Zurich:	
SGX Gen	779.20 (+6.30)
London:	
FT 100	2,652.8 (+23.5)
FT 1000	3,967.9 (+9.5)
FT-SE Mid 250	4,452.3 (+17.0)
FT-SE Small 500	1,043.10 (+1.00)
FT-SE Enterprise 100	1,697.91 (+1.03)
FT A All-Share	1,956.76 (+1.46)
FT Non-Financials	936.84 (+15.11)
FT Fixed Interest	113.10 (+0.17)
FT Govt Secs	93.38 (+0.39)
SEAO Volume	666.2m
US (Datorma)	209.27 (+0.89)
US (S&P 500)	1,354.5 (+0.008)
German Mark	2,351.2 (0.003)
Exchange Index	98.2 (Same)
Rate of England official close (1996)	1.2205
ESDR	1.0762
EPU	133.1 Aug (2.5m) Jan 1987-100
RPI	132.8 Aug (2.8m) Jan 1987-100

Source: FTSE

Figures in parentheses are weekly changes

Figures in brackets are monthly changes

Figures in italics are annual changes

Figures in bold are quarterly changes

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## STOCK EXCHANGE 30

A cheap way to offload windfall shares

# WEEKEND MONEY

## BEAUTY CONTEST 34

Societies fight it out over which looks the best



Sara McConnell asks accountants to assess the real worth of politicians' promises to cut income tax

## Voters lap up the £8bn tax duel

John Major and Tony Blair locked horns on tax this week, both holding out the prospect of lower tax bills for millions of people as the election campaign got into its autumn stride.

At the same time Labour accused the Tories of waffling on previous commitments to cut tax, while denying reports that it was planning to introduce a new 50 per cent top rate for those earning £100,000 or more.

Labour says its priority is to cut the lower rate of tax from its present 20 per cent to 10 per cent in the long term, in order to reduce the tax bills of the low-paid. The Tories are committed to reducing the standard rate of tax by 4 per cent to 20 per cent. Each proposal would cost the Treasury an estimated £8 billion.

Would you be better off under Labour or the Tories if both parties actually delivered their promises? Figures calculated for *The Times* by KPMG, the chartered accountant, show that cutting the standard rate of tax to 20 per cent would give the biggest boost to the incomes of the vast majority of taxpayers, particularly lower earners. Cutting the lower rate band would have less impact.

According to KPMG, anyone with taxable income of £20,000 would immediately find themselves paying 13 per cent less — £3,247 instead of their present bill of £3,740 — if the standard rate was cut to 20p in the pound. Under Labour's plan, their bill would be just over 10 per cent lower at £3,350 (see graphic).

Those with taxable income of £40,000 would benefit less because a proportion of their income is taxed at the higher rate. But they would still gain by nearly 10 per cent under the Tory plan. Labour's cut would benefit them by slightly less than 4 per

cent. On an income of £60,000, the proposed cut in the standard rate would reduce the tax bill by just under 5 per cent, while the cut in the lower rate will leave just over 2 per cent extra in the kitty. High earners on £100,000 gain the smallest advantage under both Labour and Tory proposals. Either way, the reduction in the tax bill would be less than 2 per cent, with a cut in the standard rate of tax marginally more beneficial.

Accountants argue that if Labour and the Tories are serious about cutting tax bills, the best way is to raise tax thresholds dramatically, by far more than the rate of inflation.

Thresholds normally rise by roughly the rate of inflation in the annual Budget, although in each of the past four years selected bands have been frozen, effectively raising taxes slightly by the back door.

Raising the initial tax threshold significantly would take many people out of the tax net altogether. Anyone with about £30,000 of taxable income would also benefit from the raising of the threshold at which they start paying higher-rate tax.

Maurice Fitzpatrick, tax manager at Chantrey Vellacott, the chartered accountant, calculates that for the same £8 billion, the threshold at which people start paying tax could be raised by £1,200. At current levels this would mean everyone could earn at least £53,000 before paying any tax.

Mr Fitzpatrick said: "Cutting the lower rate of tax to 10 per cent may help the lowest paid but will not take a single person out of tax altogether."

Nearly a quarter of all taxpayers, 5.3 million people, pay tax only at the lower rate of 20 per cent. A further 18.2 million people are basic-rate



taxpayers, while only 2.2 million pay tax at the higher rate. Simply cutting tax rates also does not remove the extra 10 per cent tax levied on all earnings between lower and upper limits (currently £61 and £455 a week) to pay for National Insurance. This weighs most heavily on those earning less than £23,000 a year because they are effectively paying an extra 10 per cent in tax on most of their earnings.

But Labour will be wary of alienating middle-income voters by calling for a redistribution of National Insurance contribution costs. Its ill-fated plan to abolish the upper earnings limit on National Insurance in 1992 was instrumental in losing Labour that general election, many say.

Labour says it has no plans in its manifesto to change National Insurance contributions. It also insists that it has no plans to raise the top rate of tax to 50 per cent on earnings of over £100,000 a year. But it is considering ways of reducing opportunities for the wealthy to shelter their money from tax as an alternative to raising rates. The top rate of tax was cut in one fell swoop from 60 per cent to 40 per cent by Nigel Lawson in 1988 and any attempt to raise it would lay Labour open to accusations that it was penalising success and enterprise.

\$100,000 fine and/or up to five years in jail. But Charles Merriman, partner in charge of Ernst & Young's UK and international desk, gives warning that the system "doesn't add anything significant other than a burden".

AMT is complex to understand and administer, says Mr Merriman, and introducing a similar system here would compound any difficulties taxpayers face working out their tax under the new self-assessment regime starting in 1997. The Inland Revenue has already been forced to simplify its proposals dramatically.

Known as alternative minimum tax (AMT), it operates alongside the mainstream tax regime, with its own rules. Individuals on the AMT regime pay a flat rate of 26 per cent (28 per cent on £175,000 or above taxable income). It is up to taxpayers to assess whether they must file returns under AMT. Detailed statutes set out who comes under the AMT regime. Anyone ignoring them faces a

## CUTTING INTO YOUR TAX BILL

	Single person	£20,000	£40,000	£60,000	£100,000
Current tax burden	£3,740	£10,258	£16,258	£34,258	
Labour promises					
Tax burden if lower rate band reduced from 20% to 10%	£3,350	£9,888	£17,888	£33,888	
Saving	£390	£390	£390	£390	
Conservative promises					
Tax burden if basic rate band reduced from 24% to 20%	£3,247	£9,394	£17,394	£33,394	
Saving	£483	£884	£884	£884	

Examples illustrate impact of 10% and 20% tax rates on taxpayers earning £20k, £40k, £60k, £100k. In all other respects they incorporate the following allowances and tax bands: Personal allowance £3,780; Married couple's allowance £7,580 at 16%; Lower rate band of tax on income up to £3,900 currently 20%; Basic rate band of tax on income from £3,901-£25,500 currently 24%; Higher rate band of tax on income above £25,500 currently 40%.

## Into action on your finances

Tax cuts should be the signal for people to review their finances and use the system to get their full entitlements.

Married couples, those whose taxable income — after allowances — is hovering around the higher-rate tax band (currently £25,500) and those putting money into pensions should be among the first to act, said Elspeth May, a partner at KPMG.

A cut in the standard rate of tax to 20 per cent would open a 20 per cent difference between the standard and higher rate of tax (assuming no change here). The gap between the higher and the lower rate would be 30 per cent. Married couples, where one partner is a higher-rate taxpayer and the other pays standard rate or lower-rate tax should put some of their

investments in the name of the latter to minimise tax.

Couples have been able to do this since 1991. Higher-rate taxpayers should have already signed over investments to their lower-earning spouses after last year's Budget which cut tax on most investment income to 20 per cent for standard and lower-rate taxpayers.

More tax cuts should provide further incentives, but some are reluctant to sign over their investments.

Taxpayers whose income after allowances just tips them into the higher rate band should act to bring their income down below the

**Weekend Money**  
is edited by  
Anne Ashworth

SARA McCONNELL

## Turning off shareholders

Tony Blair has noticed that seven million trade unionists are a minority, to judge by the stage-managed rows with the TUC this week. You might think he would still woo the half of union members who did not vote Labour in 1992. If Mr Blair is that keen to cosy up to Middle England, though, he should note that there are at least two million more private shareholders than unionists, and act accordingly.

The overwhelming majority of us own shares in privatised utilities, long the focus of Labour's vitriol. And that does not count all those whose pensions depend on them. Utility shareholders are not a voting bloc, any more than union members or the many who feature on both lists. Investors are also consumers, whose economic interest always outweighs that of savers on a crude cash calculus. As shareholders, however, many of these eight million plus people are fed up. Most fed up by far are the two biggest groups: the 2.3 million of us with shares in British Telecom and the 1.7 million individual investors in British Gas. Our political favours are up for grabs.

Those who have held British Gas shares since privatisation a decade ago — nearly all the private shareholders — have had a raw deal. They would have nearly twice as much money if they had invested in the share average. Those who bought BT shares in the third tranche have done worst of all. In each case, the losses of the past three years have little to do with trading, everything to do with regulatory change that has needed to be backed specifically by



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

government action. Once these utilities were sold to investors, to establish a stable business background and a fair balance of interests, policy was hijacked by economic theorists: investors were demonised as impersonal *rentiers* and regulation was stuck into maximum improbability drive. If Tories have lost any call on the favours of the eight million, Labour seems to have little interest in them. It is still determined to mount a levy across the board, not just on electricity and water companies, and is wedded to strengthening the "consumer" interest.

British Gas is the pre-election test. As this week's half-year figures again show, the company is suffering heavily from the take-or-pay contracts signed before the Government changed the rules and took away much of its market.

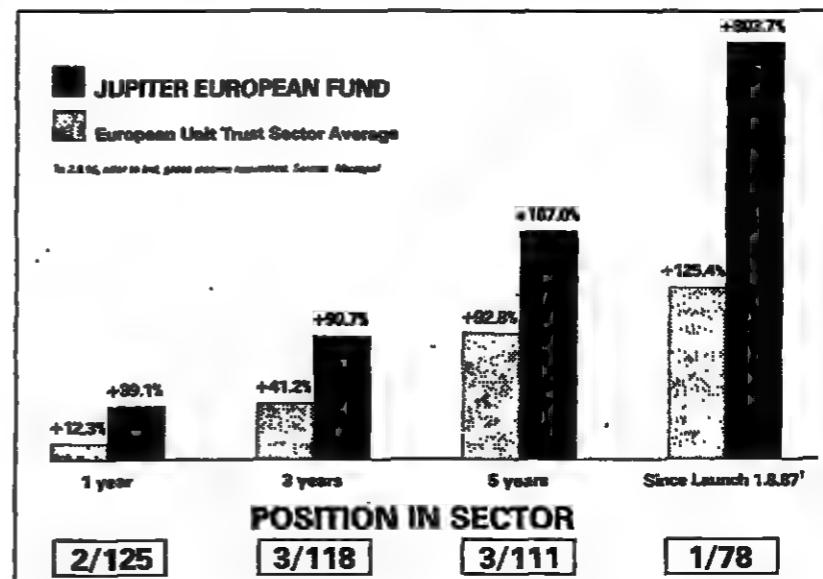
Early results of domestic competition show that most customers were satisfied with British Gas and rightly have no truck with what they fear may be fly-

by-night foreign competitors. The South West, where water bills have soared while gas and power bills have fallen, was an odd place to pilot competition. BG shows every sign of being able to compete with its pricing hands tied behind its back, not least with new services like the Goldfish credit card. Each customer lost to British Gas is still a little triumph for the regulator, a bigger loss for shareholders on those take-or-pay contracts taken to meet statutory obligations. In such circumstances, the huge revenue cuts demanded from Transco, the pipeline system that accounts for most of BG's assets, the bulk of employees and the dividend, are a socialistic attempt to destroy shareholders' interests before BG splits in self-defence next spring. BG shares now yield 9.4 per cent on a shaky dividend. The regulator has managed to raise the cost of equity capital by a third, making a private enterprise operation unviable for customers in the long term.

The company can — and must — appeal to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. But it knows there is a powerful bureaucratic solidarity between the MMC and regulators. Only a change in the political climate is likely to embolden the MMC to take a radically more sensible line than Ofgas. Maybe Labour or the Liberal Democrats will attack Ofgas for being unfair to investors as well as endangering jobs and service standards. Maybe the Tories will at last stand up for the millions they have served so badly. Maybe no one wants our votes.

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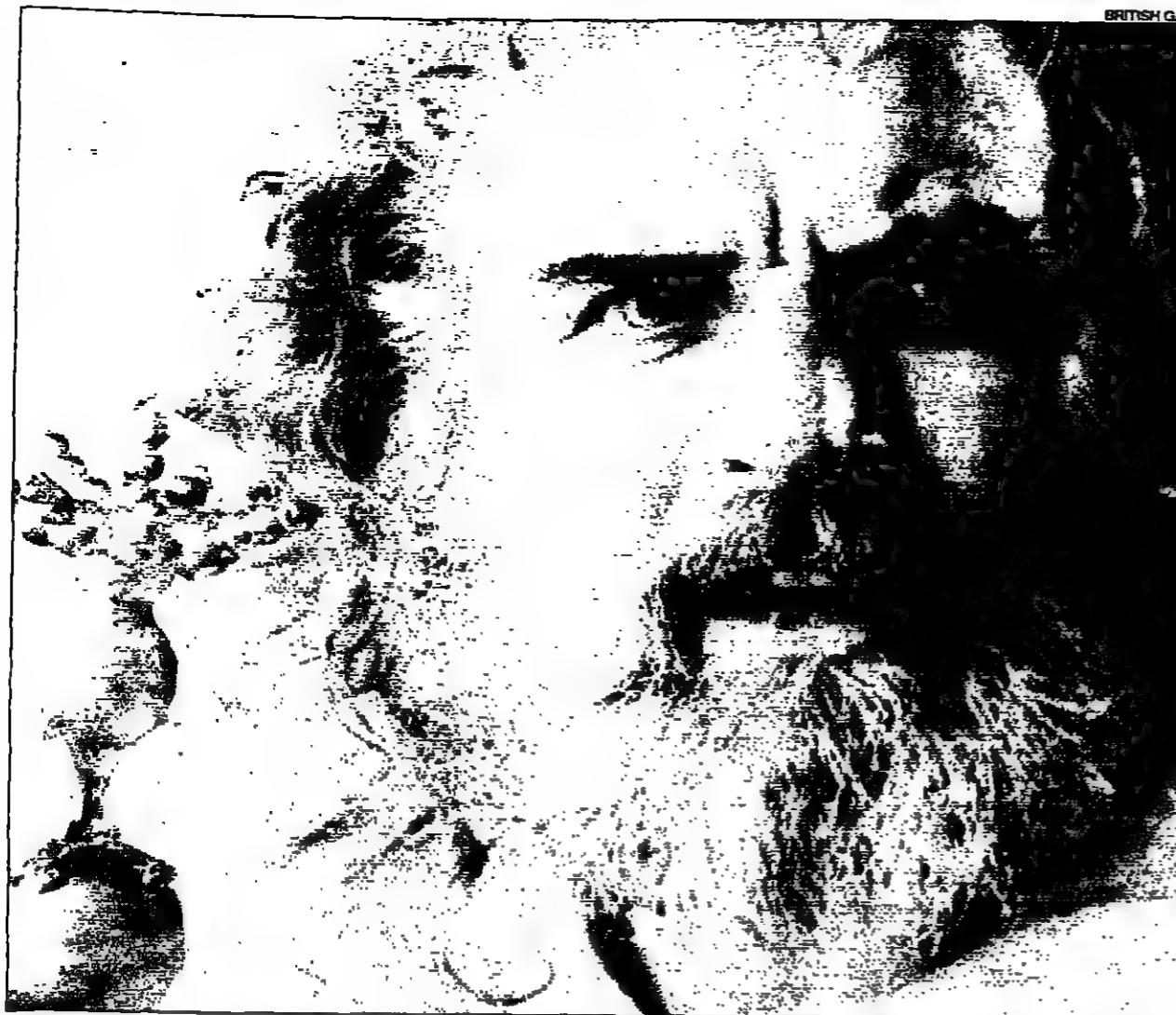
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Caroline Merrell reports the latest additions to the plastic pack



Casting the net wide: Billy Connolly, the Scottish comedian, is fronting the television advertisements for Goldfish

## British Gas takes up fishing for customers

**G**oldfish, stars of the fairground, *A Fish Called Wanda* and *Shirley Conran's Lace*, suddenly have a new role in life: they can be used for shopping, paying for meals and for reducing the gas bill.

They are not some new form of coinage, but instead are the symbol of a credit card from a joint venture company between British Gas and HFC Bank. Although goldfish are scaly and cold-blooded, according to the agency Wolff Olins, which came up with the brand, the great British public is charmed by them.

Mike Parsons, managing director of Goldbrand, the joint venture company, said: "In Eastern culture, the Goldfish symbolises wealth and prosperity." The card does have a slightly lower annual interest rate at 18.9 per cent than many other credit cards, which on average offer interest rates of about 22 per cent.

However, the Goldfish is a long way from offering the lowest rate on the market. RBS Advanta and the People's Bank of Connecticut offer cards with rates of 15.6 per cent and 14.4 per cent respectively. The launch of the

Goldfish sparked the immediate release of a new credit card from the Co-op with a market-beating rate of 7.9 per cent.

This rate will be held until April next year, when it rises to 10.9 per cent. This still represents the cheapest rate on the market.

Although the rate on the Goldfish is not the lowest on the market, it claims that most people will qualify for the new card, unlike most low interest cards where you need a higher

one point for every £1 spent: 100 points will give £1 off the gas bill. The company is also hoping to extend the loyalty system to give discounts on the household shopping bill. The Profiles loyalty scheme run by Barclaycard will give cardholders one point for every £10 spent. Two hundred points will give £100 off a Ford car, while 600 points will buy a Philips toaster.

NatWest, on the other hand, offers a loyalty scheme based

on Air Miles. Every £20 spent on a NatWest credit card will give one Air Mile; 450 Air Miles are equivalent to a return trip to Paris.

The launch of two lowish interest credit cards in one week will increase the pressure on the big credit card issuers to decrease their rates for the millions of cardholders who spend an estimated £4 billion a year on their credit cards.

The Goldfish, like cards from Barclays and NatWest, comes with a loyalty point system. Cardholders are awarded

### A credit card war will be fought on interest rates, not loyalty schemes

than average credit rating. Its launch is being backed by a £10 million advertising campaign fronted by Billy Connolly, the Scottish comedian: a factor which will certainly help Goldbrand to attain its aim of having one million cardholders within an 18-month period. It is possible to transfer balances from other credit cards.

The Goldfish, like cards from Barclays and NatWest, comes with a loyalty point system. Cardholders are awarded

on Air Miles. Every £20 spent on a NatWest credit card will give one Air Mile; 450 Air Miles are equivalent to a return trip to Paris.

The Credit Card Research Group believes that any war among issuers will be fought over the interest rate, rather than over any individual loyalty scheme. It points out that the relevance of interest rates may be overplayed because the majority of credit card holders managed to settle their debts.

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Sara McConnell on why a pension must be taken ten years early

## Annuity anomaly

Early retirement and redundancy are becoming unpleasant facts of life for thousands of workers across the country as budget cuts bite and new demands on time and facilities bring increased stress.

But the pensions system makes little allowance for anyone not staying the full course. On the contrary, such people are finding that inflexible rules are forcing them into accepting reduced retirement income.

Grahame Leon-Smith, a former headmaster of Otershaw Park, Surrey, writes: "Early in 1992, I was contacted by the Prudential regarding the Department for Education and Science-approved AVC scheme for teachers and decided to invest in it.

In September 1992, at the age of 51, I was made compulsorily redundant from my post as headmaster.

I was unsure of my future and therefore asked the Prudential to place the accumulated fund on a high-interest deposit account until I could decide precisely what to do with it.

In October 1994 the Prudential wrote asking me to buy an annuity. I was not prepared to do so because at the age of 53 it was impossible for me to purchase an annuity which would provide me with a reasonable pension.

I wrote to the Teachers Pensions Agency (which now approves the Prudential AVC) pointing out that at no time was I informed by the Prudential or the Education Department that I would have to buy an annuity within six months



Trapped by the rules: Grahame Leon-Smith is still working and does not want a pension yet

If I had to retire early, nor can I find any reference to this in the documentation. I am currently working as an educational consultant and do not wish to retire.

I do not need the annuity at this time and I wish to

purchase it when I reach my normal retirement age of 65 (or earlier if I so decide). I understand the rules had been changed to give policyholders the right to decide when to buy an annuity and I would want to take advantage of this."

**PENSIONS POSTBAG**

**Weekend Money reply:**  
"The problem with the pensions system is that it assumes you will work until you are 65 when, as you say, you will be able to buy a big enough annuity for a reasonable retirement income. Unfortunately any deviation from this life pattern can be severely financially punished."

"AVCs used to top-up an employer's pension scheme are deemed to be part of the main pension, though in your case the AVC is managed by the Pru on behalf of the TPA. If you retire early for any reason and take your main pension, as you have, you must take your AVC fund as well. This means buying an annuity within six months."

"Your main teacher's pension is based on your final salary. As part of your redundancy deal, your employer boosted your pension to the level it would have been at if you had continued working ten more years. Your employer, not you, bears the extra cost of this. But your AVC pension is based on contributions and operates under different rules."

"The Pru is sympathetic but Steve Bee, head of pensions, said: 'You are obliged to take the annuity. Revenue rules are quite clear. This should have been explained to you at the time. The Pru is investigating your complaint that you were not told about the annuity. Mr Bee argues, however, that you were given a generous deal by your employer. What you have lost on the AVC you would have more than gained on the main pension.'

"The only way to have avoided the problem would have been to have deferred your main pension, and thus your AVC."

"As you rightly say, new rules introduced last year allow retired people to put off buying an annuity until they can get a reasonable rate or until they are 75. But these rules do not apply to AVCs."

## More instant-access agony piled on by the Bristol & West

Account holders are becoming hostages to fortune. Building societies want only savers, not spenders. Hence the trend of offering a relatively attractive rate for so-called instant-access accounts — but with harsh penalties for withdrawals.

Customers are angry at the changes to Bristol & West's instant-access Select Account. From October 1 there will be a charge for withdrawals in accounts with a balance below £500. No new direct debit and standing orders will be allowed on accounts under £2,000. Customers with balances below £2,000 will no longer get cheque books, and the bill payment facility ends.

The society reasons: in a letter to account holders, that reducing the Select Account facilities will "make more time available to improve our service to you" since it will now be able to concentrate on the "three main areas of mortgages, savings and investments".

It is a classic case of rationalisation that goes with takeovers and conversions. From next summer B&W will be owned by the Bank of Ireland, though it will retain a separate identity.

"We would like people to use Select as a savings account rather than a day-to-day transaction account. We have never positioned it as a current account," said B&W. However, if you want to save rather than spend, you could get a much better rate of interest elsewhere, even from other B&W accounts. But if you want to move from the Select Account into a competitor's higher-paying account, you lose your merger bonus.

"Clearly the Bristol & West has no interest in retaining customer loyalty," said Times reader Paul Holmer. "This is short-sighted cost-cutting."

Other building societies have come up with deterrents for withdrawals from instant-access accounts. Alliance & Leicester's Prime Deposit allows two withdrawals per month and then charges 60p for each cash withdrawal and £1 for each cheque if the balance falls below £1,000 — the charges were imposed five months after the launch of the product. The Bank of Scotland's Savings similarly comes with a £3 a month fee if the balance goes below £50. Other better-paying cheque

accounts simply insist on a higher opening — and therefore running — balance. The new Leeds & Holbeck Premier Cheque has a £1,500 minimum balance. The Halifax Asset Reserve demands a £5,000 balance.

The Woolwich this week has come up with a postal account that gives a whole new meaning to 60 days' notice. The Postal 60 Account pays competitive rates of interest — from 5 per cent gross on the minimum £2,500 to 6.5 per cent on £10,000 or over. The "60" bit would normally indicate the notice period for such an account. But with this product it means loss of interest. You can have one withdrawal a year instantly between £500 and £10,000.

**A** ny further withdrawals lose 60 days' interest. "This is not designed as an instant-access account but as a long-term, postal savings account," said the Woolwich. The Lambeth has also redefined 30 days' notice. You would expect to give 30 days' notice to withdraw cash. But with the Postal 30 you lose half the interest during the notice period.

The providers say you can get your money if you really need it and they can only offer high rates if they lock savers in. The message is clear — always read the small print on withdrawals. If you think you will want to get at your cash, be aware of the penalties.

Banks too are rethinking the current or instant-access account. Last week we revealed how Save Direct, the Co-operative Bank's new instant-access account, only allows you to make a withdrawal with 30 days' interest lost. And next month Barclays launches its Additions current account which has a range of value-added services such as an overdraft facility for £60 a year.

SARAH JONES

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مكتبة الرحل

Anne Ashworth assesses latest moves in the saga of the European trust investors

## Kleinwort trust squares up again with Touche Remnant

**K**ept is once more dangled with Treg. Those familiar with these unlovely acronyms will know that there has been a resumption in the hostilities between the Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation Investment Trust (Kepit) and its unwelcome bidder Touche Remnant European Growth trust (Treg).

This week, the Kepit board has unveiled a joint venture with M&G, the unit trust group, whereby poor-performing Kepit would be broken up. The immediate result was harsh words from the Henderson Touche Remnant's TG European Growth trust (Treg) which is offering £500 million for Kepit. We explain the developments.

**Q** What are the terms of the Kepit deal?

**A** Shareholders will be able to swap Kepit holdings for either units in a new Kleinwort Benson European Privatisation trust, or in M&G Europe & General, an existing unit trust. Investors who want cash can switch into Kleinwort's Money Market trust and then immediately liquidate their holdings. A combination of all three is possible.

Shane Ross, Kepit chairman, said the board chose the M&G deal because it was the most attractive. But some cynics have pointed out the past relationship between Kleinwort and M&G. Kleinwort once held a big M&G stake.

Others saw the arrangement as a face-saving operation for Kleinwort Benson Investment Management, Kepit's manager, enabling it to continue to earn management fees from the new European Privatisation unit trust, and so compensating for the loss of the large income it has always derived from Kepit.

**Q** How does this arrangement compare with the Touche Remnant bid and the proposals from other fund managers?

**A** Kepit proposes to sell all Kepit's holdings, returning the cash to investors by the end of November.

It claims that it made preparations for the sale which would enable it to pay 97.3p



per share. However, this figure is only an estimate. Investors can also opt for shares in Treg, whose performance puts M&G Europe & General in the shade.

The Kepit board says Treg's manoeuvre would be expensive, and that the market would mark down prices in European shares in advance of the sell-off, reducing the payout to shareholders.

**Q** Tell me more about the other offers.

**A** About ten fund management groups, including Barings, Flemings and Guinness Flight have also submitted plans for Kepit's future. Provided they give their consent, their schemes will be disclosed to Kepit shareholders later this month, accompanying the full details of the KBIM and M&G deal.

Guinness Flight has said this week that if shareholders accept Kepit's proposal, it will give investors taking cash an opportunity to invest in its Global Privatisation trust.

**Q** Who is offering the best deal, Kepit or Treg?

**A** Analysts calculate Kepit is putting about £10 million more on the table than Treg. They point out that Kepit will be giving 100 per cent of asset value, unlike Treg which will offer 99.5 per cent of asset value.

Kepit can pay more because KBIM and M&G are making a contribution to the costs of the break-up. KBIM is also waiving its right to a termination fee for loss of fund under management.

The intentions of Kepit's largest shareholder remain

perhaps as much as third, would be liquidated under the terms of the KBIM and M&G deal. However, since the market cannot anticipate which shares would be sold, it could not mark them down before the sale.

Scottish Value Trust, a large shareholder, is well-satisfied with the Kepit and M&G deal. The trust should make £2.5 million from its 3.7 per cent Kepit stake, bought in March, before the beginning of hostilities.

The intentions of Kepit's largest shareholder remain

unclear. SBC Warburg, the securities house, has now accumulated a 9.07 per cent stake, presumably only with the aim of making a profit, but this has not been confirmed.

Yesterday NatWest Stockbrokers recommended that Kepit investors should sell now, as most investors are likely to take the cash option in the KBIM and M&G deal.

This means that an unexpectedly high portion of shares would need to be sold off, reducing prices and depressing the return for all investors.

## AEA sell-off seeks the sophisticated investor

**T**he final privatisation under the current Parliament will make its debut this month, when AEA Technology, part of the Atomic Energy Authority until recently, is floated.

The privatisation is expected to be one of the more difficult to get off the ground, because there is no similar company on the market with which to compare it and recent improvements in the company's balance sheet are attributed to cost-cutting, not sales growth.

In addition, anything connected with nuclear power is difficult to sell.

**What does the company do?**

It is described as a science and engineering group. Its activities include decommissioning nuclear reactors, developing better batteries for portable telephones and monitoring air quality. It helped BAA with the risk assessment for the Heathrow Express tunnel and helped to improve the exhaust systems for Subaru's World Rally Championship team. About half of its business is nuclear-related.

**What will the shares cost?**

The offer price is expected to range from 240p to 270p per share, valuing the company at £192 to £216 million.

**What about the dividend?**

The gross notional net dividend is 7.5p. This is what the directors would have recom-

mended for the year to March 31 if the float had taken place at the start of that year.

**How attractive is the offer?**

Andrew Couch, head of Guinness Flight's Privatisation Fund notes that AEA has big growth potential but with 21 operating companies in niche businesses, it is difficult to predict how it will fare.

On the plus side, about 46

per cent of its sales are non-nuclear related, and there is scope to improve the performance of AEA's consultancy business. On the down side, about 54 per cent of the business is exposed to nuclear technology of some sort, and government contracts, in particular, are in decline. AEA is in a position where non-nuclear revenue needs to outstrip nuclear, but they are in the right areas: about 24 per cent of revenues come from decommissioning. There are no big nuclear liability issues like British Energy. He thinks the pricing is about right.

**How do I subscribe?**

Instead of a public offering, the shares are being sold via intermediaries. Among private investors, the target audience is the affluent clients of private brokers. If you want to take part in the launch of AEA, you should contact a broker. You can also get a prospectus from J Henry Schroder on 0171 382-6000 or Cazenove, tel: 0171 588-2521.

KAREN ZAGOR



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SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Caroline Merrell on a dispute over rating lenders' performances

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\*The guarantee is applied on the 8th November 2001. Your original investment is guaranteed unless you have already made a complete withdrawal of your investment. If you make a partial withdrawal from your original investment before 8th November 2001 the amount of your original investment guaranteed will be reduced. The guarantee is provided by Marks &amp; Spencer Financial Services Ltd. and does not form part of the General PEP.

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Many people consider beauty contests are now a touch passé, not so the building societies, which all want to be number one

## Time to change the high society league?

The last year has been a tumultuous one for the building society movement. Like so many skittles, five of the top 20 societies have fallen for the attractions of flotation on the stock market.

The trend towards demutualisation has been matched by an equal but opposite pull in the direction of greater mutualism, with many societies firmly pinning their colours to the mast by enhancing mortgage and savings rates for their members.

Some of this upheaval is reflected in the annual survey of the top 20 building societies by UBS, the broker. The report analyses the performance of the top societies using key factors such as profitability, capital strength, market share, arrears, efficiency and growth. It then comes up with a league table of creditworthiness.

In the past, the table has been used by individuals and institutions as a guide to where to find a home for their money. Now, those on the mutual side of the fence claim that the league table is nonsense because those societies keen to give back more profits to their members will look weaker than those societies hoping to increase their profits to

enhance shareholder returns. The biggest critic of the methods used in the report is Brian Davis, the chief executive of Nationwide.

He says: "It really is a nonsense,

comparing societies poised to become a pic against those who are to remain mutual. It is like comparing fruit with acorns." Such is the Nationwide's disaffection with UBS that it refused to supply it with a mission statement for this year.

National & Provincial, now part of the Abbey National, managed to jump 11 places up the table mainly by improving its arrears position, and by increasing the profit margin on savings.

Two of the other biggest climbers in this year's league were the Britannia and West Bromwich building societies. Both jumped six places. Britannia was able to achieve its increase in profitability by decreasing arrears and by buying up the Lloyds Bowmaker mortgage portfolio. Next year, the society expects a 40 per cent fall in profits because of the package of mutual benefits it is offering members. The West Bromwich Building Society, believed to be ripe for takeover, managed to increase its profitability through the purchase of the AXA Equity & Law mortgage book.

The biggest faller was the Woolwich Building Society, which plans to convert to a bank next year. According to the report, the Woolwich continued to have a high cost base.

## TOP 20 SOCIETIES

Society	1995	1996
Halifax	1	1
Northern Rock	2	3
Yorkshire	3	4
Coventry	4	1
National & Prov	5	18
Britannia	6	12
Bradford & Bingley	7	11
Abbey National	8	-
West Bromwich	9	15
Birmingham Mid	10	7
Alliance & Leic	11	8
Chelsea	12	9
Portman	13	14
Nationwide	14	18
Woolwich	15	9
Derbyshire	16	12
Leeds & Holbeck	17	17
Skipton	18	19
Nor & Peterboro	19	-
Bristol & West	20	20

Source: UBS Global Research

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5

## TRAVEL



Where to escape from the Christmas turkey

Pages 17-20

PLUS: Tom Cobley's country, page 21

## BOOKS



Classic authors enjoy a Dickens of a shelf life

Page 12

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Marcus Binney on the saving of a mansion

Page 8

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## PETS



Why the gerbil makes a perfect first buy

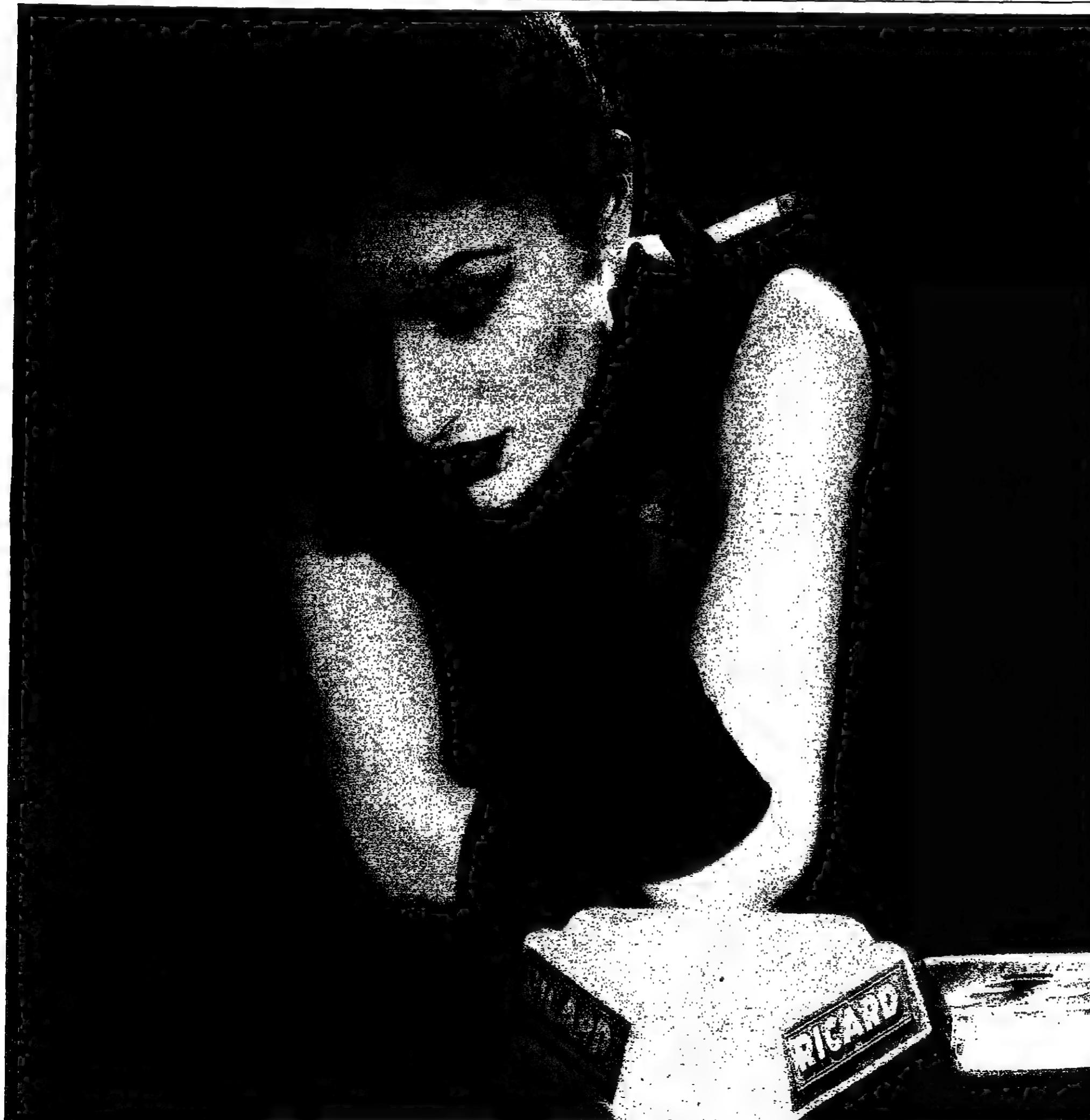
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PLUS: Feather report, page 16

# WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 1996

## KATE MUIR ON THE CONTINENTAL HABIT



In America tobacco is a drug, in France smoking is an art. Who will win the real cigarette war?

**L**unchtime in the Café de la Mairie across from Saint-Sulpice in Paris: a beautiful woman enters and heads for a back banquette. She lights up a Gitanes and stretches her back like a luxuriating cat. She orders a salad as her second cigarette burns in the ashtray. Then she smokes her third between bites of lettuce. This is a step up from smoking between courses. For dessert, she combines Gitanes and an espresso. Her tastebuds are dead, but she has the figure of a whippet.

The Franco-Britannique Hospital, obstetrics department: the pregnant women waiting endlessly for their monthly check-ups look tense, not about birth but because some are dying for a cigarette. Outside, by the hospital's rose garden, a woman with what seems like a Space Hopper up her shirt sneaks a quick drag. Inside, others give her jealous looks. One tucks her Marlboro Lights deeper into her bag next to her copy of *J'attends un enfant*.

A family bistro near Montparnasse: a request for the non-smoking section meets with a pitying look. This "section", compulsory by law, is one table directly opposite the lavatory. Worse still, the lavatory is a stand-up one where the aim must be true. Every five minutes, the smoke-free diners are reminded of this fact as the door swings open.

A grand exhibition at the Pompidou Centre: 20 of the greatest names in design have put their minds to a project of national import — recreating the Gitanes Blondes packet. The task is treated with the same seriousness as, say, a redesign of the French flag. The Blondes packet is a national icon, a symbol of French sophistication. The winner says his redesign symbolises "rebirth" and is for "the young smoker — open, cool, artistic, sympathetic". The papers print this, unquestioning.

**A**s these vignettes show, France is one of the remaining countries where you can smoke and not feel a pariah. In America, President Clinton has classified cigarettes as a drug, but in France smoking remains an art. Both President Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé have been caught smoking in public. The French would be unlikely to elect a president who did not inhale.

On paper, France has stricter rules on smoking than America or Britain. The French have banned all tobacco advertising on television and in magazines since 1991, making Clinton's recent curb on advertisements near schools and in youth magazines seem tame. Smoking has also been illegal for the past five years in all cafes, public workplaces, restaurants and stations, except in designated smoking sections. But as the newspaper *Liberation* noted, "The smoking ban is just a big joke."

Café owners have had a tendency to declare their entire room a smoking section. Others have put sarcastic signs in the window: "Non-smokers welcome." Even in the cafeteria of the Palais de Justice, police and judges puff away in a thick fog under the no-smoking signs, each

Continued on page 2, col 1

FOOD ..... 3 GARDENING ..... 4,5 PROPERTY ..... 6,8 SHOPPING ..... 11 BOOKS ..... 12,13 GOING OUT ..... 14,15 PETS ..... 16 TRAVEL ..... 17-23 GAMES ..... 25

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## INSIDE STORY

## 'A lot of doctors here smoke - even cancer specialists'

Continued from page 1  
risking a £100 fine. Compare this to New York, where last year's smoking ban was obediently complied with in restaurants, and \$700 (£470) fines were instantly imposed by the city smoking police on those who misbehaved.

In Paris, the only restaurants that have found it worthwhile to pander to the law on smoking are those that cater for tourists. The Art Nouveau brasserie Bolinger has turned over its main room, with a beautiful stained-glass dome, to non-smokers — that is, rich Americans drawn by the *Michelin Guide*. The native smokers are relegated upstairs.

In most restaurants, however, diners are treated better in smoking sections, while non-smokers are punished with the worst tables.

The ban reached a level of farce in the Métro this summer when transport officials gave out free chocolates to passengers in an attempt to discourage smoking on the platforms — an act which is illegal anyway.

Meanwhile, 34 per cent of the French remain confirmed smokers, compared with 28 per cent of Britons and 25 per cent of Americans.

**I**s this resistance because the individualistic French dislike interference from authority? Is it because they somehow believe they are immortal, that cancer and heart attacks will pass them by? Or is it because smoking is so socially condoned, so much part of the culture, that *la pause café*, the coffee and fag break, will never die?

Of course, smokers themselves are dying constantly — 60,000 a year of tobacco-related diseases. Lung cancer is the largest cause of death for Frenchmen and it will soon be the same for women. But somehow the shadow of cancer does not hover so menacingly as it does in Britain. Many doctors are somewhat lackadaisical about disciplining their patients, according to François Turpin of the anti-cancer centre at St Cloud. "Doctors here could be a lot more forceful and give better information. Quite a lot of doctors here smoke anyway — even the cancer specialists," Dr Turpin says.

Indeed, one pregnant friend with a pack-a-day habit discussed the risks with her doctor, who said: "I would rather have a calm, relaxed mother-to-be than someone tense and upset trying to give up smoking."

The taboo on pregnant women smoking is less noticeable in France. During an interview with *The Times* earlier this year, the seven-months-pregnant actress Emmanuelle Béart smoked throughout. Compare this with the fuss over the interview in the American magazine *Vanity Fair* with the singer Courtney Love during her pregnancy, when the cigarette she was smoking had to be air-brushed out so as not to offend the American public.

As Dr Turpin notes: "French people are just not *au courant* with the risks, so they worry less. They are under-educated about the dangers."

The French spend a measly three centimes (less than 1p) per person per year on anti-smoking campaigns, the British about 10p, and the Americans \$1 (70p).

**T**he Government warnings on French cigarette packs are half the size of those in Britain, and nothing like as direct as the American "Smoking kills". Instead, there is the wimpy "Smoking is bad for your health" or "Smoking can cause cardiovascular disease".

Pascal Melian-Chenin, the spokesman for the national anti-smoking campaign, says: "The French don't understand why smoking is forbidden in public places. There has never been any research done here on the effects of passive smoking, so no information programme exists on its dangers. The rights of non-smokers do not seem to matter."

He also has an unexpected explanation for the lack of change in France — the long held link between smoke-filled



The only restaurants in Paris that have found it worth their while to pander to the law on smoking are those that cater for the tourists

rooms and industrial action.

"Most of the unions here have resisted the anti-smoking laws, because they see them as a way to fire people or hire only non-smokers — also many union leaders smoke," he says.

Interference with the right to smoke is considered an attack on civil liberties. There was outrage when the nightclub owner Régine and her son were arrested earlier this year on an American Airlines flight to New York after he started smoking in the aisle.

Most of the French press were up in arms, on the side of smoking, and there were strong editorials against the American "nanny state".

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The narrow tabac just off the Marché St-Honoré in Paris has a queue to the door every morning. "I see the same people every day on their way to work. I know their brand," the patron says, indicating the 100-plus varieties with his nicotine-yellowed fingers. He still smokes Gauloises, considered by many city dwellers to be a peasant's cigarette. "Even

if I don't know the customer, I can often tell. With young men it's Marlboro, with young women it's Marlboro Lights. Businessmen, it's mostly Gitane."

At lunchtime, customers come in for a chat and to play Lotto, France's national lottery. Even in the city, the tabac has the intimacy of a village shop.

Business is not too bad, the patron says, although he loses customers just after price rises. In fact, over the past five years cigarette consumption has declined by 10 per cent — but not among young people. There are no laws against children buying cigarettes. Indeed, the seven-year-old girl in my building goes out on her scooter to fetch her mother's king-size menthol.

Thus, a spectacular six out of ten French 18-year-olds smoke, the most in the European Union, and 8 per cent of 12-year-olds are addicted. (Incidentally, 12-year-old smokers alone bring in tax revenue to the Government of £3

million a year, according to the anti-smoking campaign.)

Outside every school at breaktime, clumps of teenagers light up under the eyes of their teachers. There is no need to hide behind the bike sheds. Although school term has not started, teenagers hanging round the basketball court off the Rue du Bac are clearly underage smokers.

France's hero, General de Gaulle, was a three-pack-a-day man who gave up in 1947 when he woke to find his bed on fire, but still continued to carry a lighter in case any ladies smoked, and allowed his Cabinet members to puff cigars during meetings.

When challenged, smokers will often cite the example of their countrywoman Jeanne Calment, who has been addicted to the weed for nearly a century. The oldest person in the world at 121, Mme Calment smokes every day after meals. She gave up at 117, but started again a year later.

"I like cigarettes and I was miserable when I wasn't smoking," she explains.

Cigarettes are cheap in France, from 45p (52p) a pack, the same price as a double-scoop ice-cream. Pocket money goes a long way on nicotine.

How can France's 15 million smokers kick the habit when it is so ingrained in the national psyche? How can they con-

demn an act that Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Prévert, Catherine Deneuve, Serge Gainsbourg and Jean Genet performed with such style?

In the black and white postcards of Paris in the late 1940s and 1950s, no Left Bank intellectual is without his snout.

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A spectacular six out of ten French 18-year-olds smoke, the most in the European Union

Cover picture by MAL STONE  
Main picture this page by REX FEATURES. Scene above right and picture of Chancellor Kohl by COLORIFIC.  
President Clinton by AP

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"Sucker" Clinton does not inhale

In America, home of the anti-tobacco movement, the campaign against smoking has been conducted over 30 years. It has been a classic deployment of emotional advocacy and long-term political control-wresting. At times it has run counter to American traditions of personal freedom, but for smokers there is now no escaping the fact that, officially, they are exiles.

Anti-smoking advocates typically come from the educated middle classes, people well versed in the victim-speak of liberal America and expert at organising themselves into committees. The tobacco industry has spent millions of dollars trying to vanquish the threat, but for every lobbyist and every lunch there has been more than adequate numbers of opponents of the weed.

John Banzhaf, who founded the action group Ash (Action on Smoking and Health) in the 1960s, identifies certain important dates in the transformation of smoking in America from popular habit to pariah addiction:

● 1964: the US Surgeon General's office reported that smoking could cause lung cancer, the first Government agency to do so.

● 1973: smoking was banned in some sections of American aeroplanes.

● 1978: Arizona became the first state to recognise non-smokers'

## HOW AMERICA UPPED THE ANTI

rights. This led to the restriction on smoking in some public places such as lifts and corridors.

● 1976: first injunction against smoking in an office. The case, in New Jersey, concerned a telephone company employee who claimed she was sensitive to smoke and deserved a non-smoky work atmosphere. The court agreed.

● 1981: New Hampshire banned smoking in most public places.

● 1982: the No Net Cost Tobacco Programme Act eliminated many subsidies to American tobacco farmers.

● 1986: two federal agencies concluded that passive smoking could cause lung cancer.

● 1988: smoking ban on internal flights of two hours or less.

● 1990: smoking ban on all domestic flights.

● 1993: the Environmental Protection Agency reported that passive smoking can cause group A carcinogens.

● 1994: McDonald's banned smoking in all its hamburger

outlets — a "genuinely important moment" in the words of John Banzhaf.

● 1996: Bill Clinton, the first American president habitually to suck until cigars (his wife will not let him smoke in the White House) classed tobacco an addictive drug. This placed cigarettes in the domain of the Food and Drugs Administration, which quickly issued guidelines. Tobacco advertisements in youth-orientated magazines are now limited and cigarette hoardings at sports venues are restricted.

For all the legislative muscle the non-smokers now have, cigarette manufacturers have not yet lost the war. Smoking among children is on the rise, and in chic urban circles, such as twenty-something Manhattan, the cigarette remains hip. Groups such as Ash do not admit it, but there is a suspicion that the smoking argument has now reached the stage that the more they drone on about the dangers of cigarettes, the more the young will be inclined to want to light up, partly to see what all the fuss is about, partly to irritate the older generation.

QUENTIN LETTS



## THE EUROPEAN HABIT

● SPAIN is a smoker's bastion. Nearly 40 per cent of the population smokes, and it is the country with the highest per capita consumption of cigarettes in the European Union.

Although men still have the edge in the cigarette stakes, señoritas may soon outnumber them.

Tobacco advertising is permitted on billboards and in magazines but banned on television although the husky, fag-frayed voices of Spain's lady newscasters are the most perfect publicity cigarette companies could wish for.

Even though the Government has an ambitious anti-smoking campaign, aimed particularly at schoolchildren, it also guards jealously its monopoly over the production and distribution of tobacco in the country. The contradiction has not so far been noted officially.

● THE GREEK state airline, Olympic Airways, banned smoking on its domestic flights in 1990. Last year the health ministry aired several television commercials in which smokers were portrayed as definitely un-cool. Yet about 40 per cent of all Greeks smoke, and the number is rising, despite a flurry of public awareness activity by the Ministry of Health aimed at young people and pregnant women. About 65 per cent of Greek doctors smoke, even in hospital corridors, where large no-smoking signs are blithely ignored by staff, patients and visitors.

Studies show that 38 per cent of boys and 39 per cent of girls aged 17-18 smoke. Officials blame a strong tobacco lobby for discouraging severer anti-smoking measures. Export earnings from tobacco last year totalled almost £100 million.

● IN ITALY, smoking is so much a way of life that when the television cameras zoomed in on the winner of the Palio, the Siena horse race around the streets, last month, the jockey's first reaction was to light up. Politicians, doctors, film stars and sportsmen think nothing of smoking on television. All the more surprising then to discover that the number of smokers in Italy is falling. In 1980, 30 per cent of adults smoked; now it is just over 25 per cent. This is

partly due to the 1990 ban on advertising cigarettes, which can be bought only from authorised outlets. Statistics appear to show a decline in smoking among the 14 to 18-year-olds, but the anecdotal evidence is that they smoke more and that more girls smoke than boys.

According to Rosy Bindl,

the Minister of Health,

Italy is "suspicious of moralising puritanical crusades" such as the one

launched by President Clinton. "We need health education, not slogans."

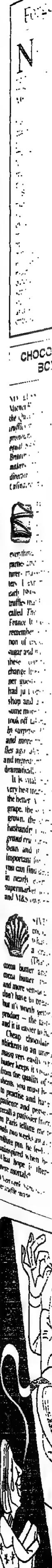
● THE GERMANS, reportedly obsessed with health and a mania for regulation, have a surprisingly liberal attitude to smoking. Trains have extensive smoking carriages and restaurants do not consign smokers to the worst tables.

More than 40 per cent of men and about 30 per cent of women smoke, but the number of those who have kicked the habit has been steadily growing over the last ten years.

Coalition politics are still thrashed out in smoke-filled rooms, but the political parties ban smoking and hide the ashtrays when they invite the television cameras to film their manoeuvres at work. Chancellor Helmut Kohl still smokes a pipe, but no longer in public.

Tobacco advertising is banned from radio and television, and glamorisation of smokers is officially outlawed, but that has not prevented prominent ads for the popular "West" brand. A couple, visibly topless, laze in a mountain lake puffing in intimate contentment. "Test it," says the caption suggestively.

● Reporting by Tunku Varadarajan, John Carr, Richard Owen and Peter Bild.



## FOOD

Forget exams and league tables. At last, the answer to a problem that has worried parents for years: what to put in the tuck box?

Never having had a boarding school education, I know little of what goes into tuck boxes. The nearest we got to tuck at our school was those third-pint bottles of milk which Mrs Thatcher stopped. They were doled out by the prefects in such an engaging way that they thumped you if you had the cheek to ask for a bottle, and thumped you even harder if you didn't, because they felt like it. Happy days. She may not have known it, but stopping that milk may have been Mrs T's greatest contribution to law and order.

But I can imagine what goes into a tuck box. There must be nothing of a nutritional nature, vitamins specifically excluded, and if any item cannot be held in one hand, the wrapper removed with the other and then eaten while still turning the pages of a Latin primer, it is no tuck box food at all. All this is very much on my mind, having just dispatched a child back to his boarding school for the new term. I neither shopped for, nor packed the tuck box, and so it would be unwise of me to criticise. However, it would be fair to say

## Making a break for the boarder

that the contents owed more to the efforts of that nice Cadbury family than to ours. But we are not alone: one returning boy was heard to boast that his tuck box contained nothing but a kilo of Frosties.

Do not think we are not shame. One proud boy lugged his mum's massive fruit cake more than 200 miles only to find that the journey had reduced it to its original ingredients. Never mind, she may be a lousy cook, but she's a real parent, and he'll think lovingly of her every time he takes a teaspoon to that mountain of crumbs. But for most parents, carrying a burden of guilt for having sent their children away in the first place, and feeling that they should be provided for as if they were in for a spell as a Beirut hostage, where do they turn for advice? No one has given this specialised but essential branch of family cookery much thought.

But I have, and I am now of the

opinion that nothing beats a cake. No ordinary cake, though: it needs to be rich enough to be fortifying, heavy enough to keep them at their desks during homework, moist enough to last without the lid on the tin (because they will forget it is there), and also be eatable with a protractor, and hold together in such a way that the crumbs can be rolled into tight balls and flicked across a classroom with a ruler. Here goes.

In the early 1960s, the middle-aged Stella Atherbury, who confesses to being no cook at the time, decided to open a country hotel. Her book, *Never Too Late* (now out of print), told of her rapid education in the kitchen. One major problem was never knowing

## HOME MADE



Paul Heiney

with any certainty how many people would be requiring afternoon tea, and hence how many cakes she should bake, and which they might prefer — like having to feed a horde of schoolchildren, really. So she came up with a "cake foundation" recipe and, when she wanted a cake, all she had to do was quickly add the fruit, spice, chocolate, cherries, whatever. All the hard work had already been done. Ingenious, for there is no doubt that if the cake is a success, there will soon be a blot-stained note requesting another.

The foundation consists of a pound of cooking margarine or butter, a pound of caster sugar and four eggs. The sugar and margarine are creamed and then,

they were a mush. I took 10oz of my foundation, simply added an ounce of butter, two of dark brown sugar, 8oz of mixed dried fruit and candied peel, 8oz of plain flour and a teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda. Together with an egg, I mixed them until they held together, and found it was the easiest cake I had ever made. Then I added about half a pint of the apple mush, a hefty teaspoon of ground cinnamon instead of the recommended 2oz of chopped preserved ginger (because he doesn't like it), and mixed. That's it. Too easy.

With a gallon or two of foundation lurking in the larder, you could have a freshly-baked cake every day of the week for the time it takes to do a bit of simple mixing. I baked it for about an hour and quarter in a medium oven.

It smells fantastic, seasonal and inspiring. Resisting all temptations to devour it, I have put it in the post.

I have not yet heard how things are going this term, but if he writes asking for another one, but with a file added to the mixture, we shall know that school is running normally.

ADRIAN BROOKS/TIMES/IMAGES

## CHOCOLATE BOX

### Buffalo on the bill

NO LESS a judge than Michel Roux described her as the Queen of Chocolate: her truffles moved Egon Ronay to pronounce that they had no equal. SARA JAYNE is one of Britain's finest chocolate makers and the marketing director of the Academic Culinaire in London.

HAVING been passionate about food and cooking all my life, insistent on making everything for my dinner parties and tired of manufacturers' mass-produced imposters, I experimented in the early 1980s with a recipe for truffles that I found in a book called *The Great Chefs of France*. It was, as far as I can remember, a simple combination of cocoa powder, icing sugar and butter. As it is with these coincidences which change lives, two of my dinner guests on that occasion had just opened a fine food shop and asked me to make some more to sell. The truffles took off, taking me completely by surprise. That was 14 years and more than 300,000 truffles ago, although the recipe and ingredients have changed dramatically since then.

It is vital that you use the very best ingredients, the finer the better. As the variety of the grape, the soil in which it is grown, the climate and the husbandry is so important for grand cru wines, so the cocoa bean and its geography is important for chocolate. But you can find decent chocolate in nearly every high street supermarket (look for Menier and M&S own brand).

THOSE relentless sensation-seekers among you who are already bored with batik, dried of Thai, and sufficed with sushi will be delighted to learn that a new restaurant craze is on the way: Latin American.

My Kinda Town — the owner of the Chicago Pizza Pie Factory and Henry J. Bean chains — has followed up the success of its Salsa and Cuba restaurants in London by opening a third Latin restaurant, the Havana in Fulham Broadway, west London, while next week sees a whole week devoted to Argentina in such beacons of London fashionability as the Groucho Club, the Avenue and Kensington Place.

Before you get too excited, I feel it is only fair to warn you that the success of Latin American restaurants probably owes rather more to the popularity of the caliphras (a heady rum and lime cocktail) and the seductiveness of the music than to the quality of the

cuisine. "Throughout Argentia Week, you will have the chance of experiencing Dolores Sola and Maria Volonte performing vibrant seductive tango," heavily breathes the leaflet issued by John Armit Wines (0171-727 6846), which is co-ordinating the week's events.

If you can't make a date with Dolores and Maria you can always console yourself with a jar of Dulce di Leche, the irresistibly fudgy caramel spread that forms the backbone of the Argentinian desserts which are (according to the aforementioned leaflet) "born of the fantasies of Argentinian women who are some of the most beautiful in the world".

Presumably they just fantasise about it rather than eat it.

## DIGEST



Fiona Beckett

A 450g jar contains a mind-boggling 5,800 calories. If you don't care, you can find it in Sainsbury's Special Selection at £2.95 for a 450g jar.

## Get baking

IT IS NOT often that I get inspired by books on baking, which these days mainly seem to focus on how to make a cake in the shape of Pamela Anderson. But a new book by former *MasterChef* winner Sue Lawrence, *On Baking* (Kyle Cathie, £18.99), is enticing enough to make you want to take it up full time.

She includes a wide range of recipes from the homey (singin' hundies) to the exotic (spinach empanadas) to the downright decadent (polenta chocolate cake). Among the other recipes I'm dying to try are lime and brown sugar meringue biscuits, yoghurt and bramble scones and banana pizza.

Incidentally, if you are hankering after a Pamela Anderson cake, from next month you will be able to buy Sainsbury's new Babecake complete with "edible 3D red fondant bathing suit" for just £7.50. Can't wait.

## Book early

IT IS APPALLING to have to think of Christmas already, but if you want to eat out it's as



Buffalo in the wings: after ostrich and kangaroo meat comes cheese made from buffalo milk as well as steaks for the well-heeled and adventurous

well to make a reservation now. Not that it's cheap. You could probably take the entire family to the Costa Brava for the price of Christmas dinner in some of London's top hotels. According to a release from the Savoy group, the Berkeley will cost £115 a head, Claridges £125 and the Savoy River Room £145 (a mere £75 for children under 12).

Next year's Eve is even worse, rising to £105 (Berkeley), £225 (Claridges — including, as well they might, half a bottle of champagne) and £295 (Savoy, inclusive of drink and the Grenadier guards). Even allowing for the overtime paid to staff to work over Christmas, it seems a bit steep.

## Hot news

YET ANOTHER event designed to entice the growing band of chilliheads: Formum & Mason has a Hot and Spicy promotion running for two weeks from next Saturday. On sale will be several "infernally

hot" products including Fire of the Sea sardines, Hellfire and Damnation sauce, and Fire Nuggets — "the hottest pretzels in the world" — as well as a specially designed range of sweets including "chocolate-coated" chillies, vodka and chilli truffles, and coriander and pepper fudge.

There will also be a daily seminar on a "hot" topic, which will include Indian, Thai and Indonesian spices.

Tickets, which will be reserved in advance, are £5. For further details of events, contact Miranda Schofield on 0171-734 8040.

More food and drink in the Magazine

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## Just like mama used to make

## ITALIAN HOLIDAY REVISITED

Serves four

Sparkling wine cocktail  
Veal in mushroom and marsala sauce  
Potatoes with rosemary and olive oil  
Green salad  
Peaches baked with honey

This supper, which may remind you of your Italian holiday, uses those bottles of drink and olive oil you lugged all the way home. Marsala is required but you could substitute most fortified wines or a little less of a liqueur made from grapes or other fruit, such as crème de cassis, brandy or calvados.

## ■ Make potatoes

Pre-heat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas mark 6.

Thinly slice 500g (1lb 2oz) medium-sized new potatoes and put in a baking dish with 2lbs olive oil, a few sprigs of rosemary, salt and black pepper. Put in the oven for about

## FAST FOOD

foil and put in the oven for about 30 minutes.

## ■ Make veal

Cut 250g (9oz) button mushrooms into slices. Heat 1lbs oil in a large frying pan and cook four escalopes (try to get British) for about a minute on each side. Add 100ml (4fl oz) marsala and the mushrooms.

## ■ Serve cocktails

Put a sugar lump in the bottom of each glass. Add a little marsala, fruit liqueur or brandy and top up with sparkling wine.

## ■ Serve veal

Quickly re-heat the meat and sauce. Chop up 1lbs parsley and scatter over the meat and sauce. Serve with the potato and a green salad simply dressed with a squeeze of lemon juice, 1½ lbs olive oil, salt and pepper.

## ■ Serve peaches

Put the chopped peach on top of the mascarpone. Crush two handfuls of ratafia biscuits and sprinkle over. Serve two halves to each person.

## Shopping List

Fruit and vegetables	2 handfuls ratafia biscuits
500g (1lb 2oz) medium new potatoes	Dairy
sprigs of rosemary	4lbs mascarpone
4 peaches	Meat
250g (9oz) button mushrooms	4lbs veal escalopes (British if possible)
1lbs parsley	Drink
1 lettuce	150ml marsala or other fruity drink
squeeze of lemon	1tsp honey
Store cupboard	
4lbs olive oil	
4tsp honey	1 bottle sparkling wine

## GARDENING

## GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON  
replies to readers' letters

**Q** I grow the large-flowered tuberous begonias in a wooden conservatory and they are usually covered in flowers, strong and almost like shrubs. Last year one got mildew and this year they are all covered with it. I treated the dry tubers with flowers of sulphur in winter and have sprayed the mildew this year but to no avail. — J. Mason, Shropshire, Leicestershire.

**A** Spraying against mildew once it has got a hold in something as soft as a begonia is usually ineffective. Next year try spraying earlier, before the infection strikes, to clean up your stock. Do not grow them too hot and dry. Because they are so top heavy in pot it is easier to grow them under glass, but you must give plenty of ventilation to avoid the greatest heat. If it is any consolation, my *Begonia sutherlandii*, which grew cleanly for ten years in the north, this year succumbed to mildew in the south, even outdoors. I had assumed it to be immune.

**Q** How should you dead-head floribunda roses? If you cut back to the nearest bud you seem to take off rather a lot of stalk and leaf, but if you don't the result looks like a bat-pug muddle. — Mrs M. Bevan, Cambridge.

**A** I wonder if you are cutting back to the first dormant bud or the first bud which has started to shoot? You should remove the whole cluster of spent flowers down to the first (or first strong) leaf and bud. There may be a leaf

If you are planning an evergreen hedge, you don't have to wait until the spring. Stephen Anderton says

## Hedging your bets for the autumn

**E**arly autumn is the time to be planting evergreen hedges. There is nothing like misty, cool autumn days for settling in new evergreens, although an Indian summer and a few buckets of water are almost as good.

**Q** The heathers and

attached at the base of the cluster, especially on lank varieties such as 'Iceberg', and this will have gone. So long as you get flowers again reasonably quickly you are not cutting too low.

**A** With the exception of the tree heath *Erica arborea*, most heaths and heathers do not respond to being cut back hard. You can reduce the area they cover by cutting back sideways in March but do not expect old wood to sprout new shoots or old plants to look young again. It is better to have the lot out and start again with fresh sprays. The life span of heathers varies. Some look good for five to six years, others for 30 if you keep them well pinched back in their youth and middle age. Replant in September/October or March/April. *E. arborea* can grow to 10ft tall or more, with proper trunks. These can be cut down low in spring and will sprout well. The tree can live for 100 years or more.

**Q** Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: *Garden Answers*, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

**A** Unlike deciduous plants, evergreens not only keep their leaves through the winter but they use them throughout, continuously turning light into energy, if rather more slowly than in summer. To do that they must have roots that work properly. And to that end evergreens need to be transplanted just before the end of the season, when there is less heat and sunlight to exercise the leaves but the ground is still warm enough to encourage the roots of a newly planted shrub to push out into the surrounding soil and to establish a source of nourishment. When winter winds tear at the leaves, the sap has drawn from somewhere.

Some people like to plant evergreens in spring, just before the growing season starts in March, so that again the roots have a chance to establish themselves before being exercised by growth above. I prefer to plant in autumn, because the plants then get off to the optimum start in spring. I know a really bad winter can wallop some newly-planted hedges, burning foliage or even killing outright, and there is logic in leaving that risk in the nurseryman's hand rather than your own.

If a hedge is to go into an exposed position, then good staking of taller plants and some physical protection from the wind, by hessian or webbed plastic windbreak, is sensible.

Really gruesome, windswept seaside sites are better left until spring. But in normal garden conditions, autumn planting of most evergreens is advantageous.

Last month I spent £80 on 16

pot-grown yew trees to make a hedge. They were a couple of feet high. I could have spent half as much again for taller plants, but £80 seemed like enough for a hedge. At least with yews you can plant them well apart, at 30-36in intervals, as opposed to 12in for hornbeam, or 18in for beech.

Yew is more commonly offered pot-grown these days just because it is easier to handle for the retailers and can be sold at any time. But now is still the best time to plant it. It will come cheaper if you can find plants which have been lifted with a rootball with its soil intact and bundled in hessian. The risks are higher. But at a fiver a plant I wonder just how well they have been treated on the long journey from Holland, the home of so many non-specialist plants.

When I see bundles of Dutch-grown cherry laurel coming bare-rooted off the back of a lorry on a windy March day, in a commercial nursery, I see the sense in buying plants which can be seen to be thriving in a pot, even if they cost more. Laurel

will survive that degree of rough and tumble, but not yew. And yew, be aware, can take a deceptively long time to die. Did the yew which browned off in April or May receive the fatal shock in January, or March, or last week? How will you prove it?

You will not find much in

the way of substantial pot-grown evergreen hedging plants for under £2.50, so a hedge is an investment and it pays to cosset it.

**L**ife for hedging plants is hell. There they are, standing shoulder to shoulder for the whole of their working lives, fighting each other for food and water. If they put a leaf out of place someone chops it off.

The same goes for roots sometimes. Someone might throw them a handful of Growmore once a year, or maybe a mulch of compost. But that is all. So getting them off to a generous start is terribly important.

Dig a proper trench for a new hedge. Two feet deep and as wide much is not at all overgenerous. Get some manure or old compost into the bottom, and work some slow-release fertiliser into the soil before you plant. Pretend they are pick leeks and you are out to plant the row of rows.

Light is as important as food for a strong hedge, and hedges in dappled, overhanging corners will always be slower. Healthy yew in full light will put on a foot a year happily. Cypress will double or treble that. Even

holly, although slow to establish, will put on 18in.

But a tall hedge which is thin at the bottom is an opportunity missed. Broadleaf evergreen hedges, such as laurel and privet, are best shortened by two thirds at planting to ensure they bush out before setting off upwards.

Conifers such as cypresses and yew are better grown on a

single leader and not stopped, although the faster, sappier

species such as leylandii can be

stopped young and will

soon develop a second leader.

Holly should only be stopped if it looks

unlikely to develop a good base.

5. Maintain a foot of bare, mulched soil, between the hedge and lawn.

6. Protect the hedge with hessian or webbed plastic windbreak. Stake tall plants.

It is kind to any new

hedge to keep grass and lawns

well back for three or four

years, until they are es

ablished. I like to maintain a foot

of bare, or better still mulched,

soil between the two, to reduce

competition and to ensure that

all possible light is let in to the

lower branches in those formative years. The denser a

hedge at the bottom in its first

two or three years, the better it

will be ten years down the line.

And in 20 years. And in 50. So

give it a good start.



Plant evergreens in the autumn while the ground is still warm enough to encourage the roots to establish themselves

## PLANTING A HEDGE

Dig a trench of 2ft deep by 2ft wide. Pack manure or old compost around the root ball and work slow-release fertiliser into the soil.



## TIPS FOR A PERFECT HEDGE

1. Shorten broadleaved evergreen hedges, such as laurel and privet, by two thirds at planting to ensure that they bush out.
2. Conifers such as cypresses and yew, are better grown on a single leader and not stopped. Holly should only be stopped if it looks unlikely to develop a good base.
3. Maintain a foot of bare, mulched soil, between the hedge and lawn.
4. Protect the hedge with hessian or webbed plastic windbreak. Stake tall plants.

## PLANTING DISTANCES

Berberis darwinii	18in	Privet	15in
Box	15in	Thuja	24in
Dwarf box	9in	Yew	30in
Holly	24in	Escallonia	24in
Laurel	24in	Hebe	24in
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Leyland cypress	36in	Olearia	24in

\* Especially suitable for seaside exposure

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## GARDENING

# Mellow, yellow and bordering on dramatic

September provides an embarrassment of daisies. Suddenly the roses and delphiniums are over and the garden is bathed in the colour of rudbeckias, helianthus, heliopsis, and heleniums, all rich and golden with their own individual attractions and habits.

But what should we mix with them? It might be purple salvias, scarlet crocosmias, dahlias or reefs of rich blue-and-white agapanthus. Forde Abbey in Dorset has a huge, long border devoted to late-season yellows and mauves, and it is breathtakingly bold and beautiful in the late afternoon sun. Waterperry Gardens in Oxfordshire has stock beds where you can see dozens of late daisies strutting their various stuffs. But I have this hankering to make a border simply of different yellows and browns.

My border would involve all those yellows, but be spiked first with *Echinacea purpurea*, a stout, cone-centred daisy 2ft-3ft tall. Its attraction in good forms is the contrast of orange-brown cone with glowing, pinkish-mauve, almost liverish petals. No one walks past this one unless they are immune to large daisies.

I would also want to use the reddish-brown heleniums as well as their yellows. *H. 'Pumilum Magnum' is only 30in high, but a glorious deep yellow in its central boss and radiating petals, which are deeply notched at the edge giving the whole flower a fringed appearance. 'Crimson Beauty' is mahogany brown, earlier but similar to 'Moerheim Beauty', in which the central boss is brown and almost, as the flower ages, spherical.*

I am always reluctant to dead-head them, but it is worth it first to improve the flowers which appear later on. The same is true of the giant yellow scabious *Cephaelis*, earlier in the year. The dead-heads of the first flowers may detract from the later ones, but the last dead-heads, once the petals have dropped, are an attraction in themselves for a few weeks.

The daisies with no place in my scheme will be *Anemone tectorum* and its varieties. Generous of flower they may be, but they are too early and leave a poor-looking hole

Daisies are ideal flowers for providing a burst of colour in late summer



Rudbeckia 'Goldsturm' is the brassiest of yellows for borders

by the time the late daisies are getting into gear. Annual sunflowers, on the other hand, are fine in late summer, and there are so many to choose from now. No longer are there just the heavy-headed goliaths grown by children. There are bronzes and near-reds, and they flower anywhere from knee to head high, some with single heads and short stalks for picking, some with several heads to extend the season. Look out for 'Velvet Queen' and 'Prado Red'.

I should like to try them in my border alongside the grower Thomson & Morgan's *Amaranthus cruentus 'Golden Giant'*, an annual 'prince's feather' which grows to about 3ft high and carries panicles of warm brown, millet-like flowers over a long season.

Back to the daisies. There will be room in my garden for *Heliotis 'Light of Loddon'*, a good open-centred daisy, with neat rows of pointed, overlapping petals and a broad but gently coneshaped disc at the centre. It looks like a small sunflower. The leaves of heliotis are coarse and dreary, but can be hidden by better plants.

Then I would add *Coreopsis 'Cutting Gold'*, whose flowers are only a couple of inches across but have, for a daisy, relatively funnel-shaped flowers, and would bring variety to the faces on display. Too

many clumps of daisies, however, can pall, and some strong horizontals and verticals in the border would be beneficial. I would plant *Veratrum nigrum* as an edge-of-border incident, where you could get close to see the tiny maroon-black flowers stacked up and down the length of the flower spike. There would be some towering primrose candelabra of *Verbascum olympicum* here and there at the back to wave in the wind. I would also use columns of the dark-leaved form of common fennel, too.

A horizontal element might come from the tall but flat-headed *Achillea 'Coronation Gold'* and *Solidaster 'Lemon'*. If the border were to be predominantly yellow it would be a good idea to weave in seams of different tones of yellow, as well as different textures.

I always enjoy the bright lemon yellow petals and green nose cones of *Rudbeckia 'Herbissonne'*, which can reach off tall, and I would have the perennial sunflower *Helianthus 'Limeight'* for its gentler shade. The shorter black-eyed *Rudbeckia 'Goldsturm'* has a black cone and is the brassiest of yellows for the front of a border.

**W**hat is it about these yellow daisies which makes them need regular replanting? Left alone to their own devices, most of them soon become congested and their supporting qualities fade along with the size and number of the flowers. I should have all the daisies in this border, and the solidaster, on a two or three-cycle, dividing and replanting them in newly enriched soil in March to keep them really fresh.

Late-summer borders may be rich in end-of-year harvest colours, but that is all the more reason for keeping the plants fresh and healthy. Never mind the work: think of the results.

STEPHEN ANDERTON

• Waterperry Gardens, Waterperry, Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 0ZC (0844 392261); open weekdays 10am-5.30pm, Sat-Sun 9am. Winter until 5pm.

• Forde Abbey, Chard, Dorset, TA20 4LU (0160 220231); is open daily 10am-4.30pm all year.



*Echinacea purpurea 'Bressingham'* looks wonderful when mixed with contrasting colours

## WEEKEND TIPS

- Keep greenhouses well ventilated to reduce the risk of mildew. Clear up all fallen leaves which may encourage fungal infections.
- Pot-up spring bulbs, such as narcissi, hyacinths and crocuses. Keep the bulbs cool or plunge them in a cold frame. They should be just moist.
- Plant new heathers and remove for planting elsewhere any layers of established plants of Erica carnea and calluna.
- Plant spring cabbages, kale and savoys.
- Remove the worst broad-leaved weeds from newly seeded lawns by hand; it is too soon to use selective weedkillers.

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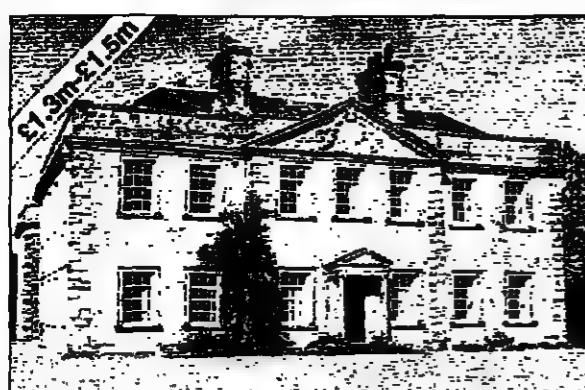
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**LONDON**  
8 St Leonards Terrace, Chelsea, SW3. Terraced period house with rear garden and access to the grounds of Burton Court and the Royal Hospital. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms, shower-room, drawing room, library, dining room, family room, kitchen, cloakroom and conservatory. About £1.5m (John D. Wood, 0171-232 1484). **CHERYL TAYLOR**

Rachel Kelly  
on how project  
experts guide  
house building  
or restoration

**E**iron John uses them. And so, increasingly, do others. Fed up with the hassle of restoring a house and co-ordinating builders, decorators, plumbers and electricians, they are hiring project managers to do it for them.

Such managers are no longer just for the rich. John used them to reconstruct a 1704 orangery, but the rest of us could use them for, say, a kitchen extension.

Last spring, APS Private Clients, a firm with a long experience of managing commercial projects, decided to provide the same service for homeowners. Laurie Atkinson, a director, says: "In a world of dual incomes, and where time is money, we realised that there was a big demand for a firm which would take charge of all aspects of moving into and restoring a house. Busy people, especially those with young families, don't have the time to do the work."

The firm claims to tackle every aspect of a move or renovation, dealing with planners, awkward neighbours and even English Heritage, the conservation quango, if need be. Typically, it will organise anything from foundations to air-conditioning, sanitary fittings to security, ironmongery to landscaping. It charges a commission of 7.5-10 per cent on the budget, but reckons to hand on savings by buying materials at cost.

Other management firms concentrate on providing services only for the rich. Simon Jones, the managing director of Gardiner and Theobald Management Services, says: "We have been looking after the private property of individuals worldwide for many years. These are often people



Richard and Julie Taylor go over the specifications of their new house in Northumberland with Geoffrey Purves, who acted as project manager

with enormous personal wealth, who may own up to 200 properties. We have project managers who are on call 24 hours a day, because these clients demand a total service. They also rely on our complete discretion."

Many architects double as project managers. The Geoffrey Purves Partnership in Newcastle-upon-Tyne has designed a number of houses, mostly in the North. Mr

Purves says that building a house doesn't need the "separate specialism" of a project manager. "A competent architect offers the same services on a small building."

**T**he Purves partnership does not work within any one particular architectural style. Mr Purves says it is "seeking to provide good architecture". It does not charge a fixed commission, but agrees a fee for each project with the client.

Another firm of architects which offers project management as part of its services is the John S. Bonnington Partnership in St Albans, Hertfordshire. It designs few private houses, but will take on large houses for the wealthy. It has recently built a multimillion pound house in Bishop's Avenue, north

London. Mr Bonnington says that to hire a large partnership like his for a small house would be expensive. Its fees depend on the size of the project. For a big development, its commission can be as small as 5 per cent, but for a £100,000 house it

would rise to at least 10 per cent. This fee includes most of the services project managers offer. The client need only liaise with the architects, who hire and deal with all the contractors, and can even arrange for foreign specialist craftsmen to come and work on the building.

But there are some areas of

a development that project managers are involved in which architects do not deal with. For example, APS will find a client land to build on or an existing building to redevelop, and can arrange the purchase. It also takes responsibility for solving party-wall disputes, a common problem in cities.

Mr Atkinson says APS offers a service that most architects used to but few do now. He calls it "a full, orchestrated, hands-on looking after of the client's interest".

• APS Private Clients 18 William Street, London EC4 0171-815 0632. Geoffrey Purves Partnership, 8 North Terrace, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 4AD (0191-232 0424). John S. Bonnington Partnership, 100 St Albans, Hertfordshire SG1 2PL (01223 823633).

**RICHARD and Julie Taylor used the Geoffrey Purves Partnership as project manager to design their house, Halcyon Days, in Swarland, Northumberland (above), to their own specifications. Mr Taylor describes it as "in a modern style with a cottage theme".**

The main feature of the four-bedroom house is a dramatic roof which slopes all the way from the top of the building, over the garage and to ground level. It was the Taylor's idea, which Mr Purves incorporated in the plans. Mr Taylor says it "makes the house unique".

The Taylors chose the Purves partnership because they wanted an architect who could also attend to all the details of its building. Mr Taylor's job as a sales manager involves travelling all over the world, so it was impossible for him to oversee building work.

Mr Purves approached various building firms about the house and took tenders for the job of building it. Then he and the Taylors decided which builder to employ. Mr Purves took responsibility for the entire project, except the bathroom and kitchen fittings, until the front-door keys were handed over.

Mr Taylor was delighted with the result. But not all the problems were taken from his shoulders. He and his wife still had to attend a few site meetings, though not as many as would be usual in the building a new house.

As far as Mr Taylor is concerned, "it would be unrealistic to say that when you have a house built to your own specifications, it's without pain and disappointment". But he says that he and his wife are "very satisfied with the final outcome".

**JUSTIN HUGGLER**

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## BOOKS

## Pickled in spun sugar

■ THE PERSIAN PICKLE CLUB  
By Sandra Dallas  
Arrow, £5.99  
ISBN 0 09 972701 3

PRESUMABLY quilting is to American mythology what harvest time is to ours. It is about being part of a community where everyone pulls together for the common good. It is also about being part of a community where everyone knows everyone else's business, where intimacy may bring both strain and comfort. As emblems of rural life, both quilting and harvesting are about times being better than they are now; both suggest innocence and honest labour, camaraderie, shared suffering, hearth and home.

The Persian Pickle Club of the title is a quilting group run by a group of women in a small Kansas farming community. The club is the focal point of a plot in which the predominant features of traditional rural life, not to mention a local conspiracy, are investigated against a backdrop of social and economic unrest (the 1930s Depression) and the arrival of a city girl determined to unearth the community's skeletons.

The plot lacks substantial originality but the book contains the makings of a really sinister novel. Its undoing, however, is a coy tone and underdeveloped narrative and characters. The prose is full of detail but it has the breathy quality of its heroine, Queenie Bean, and some of her stodgy lack of curiosity. Perhaps this is deliberate, but the effect is to diminish what might have been menacing into something prosaic and dull.

If you liked *How to Make an American Quilt and Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle-Stop Caf*, you will love *The Persian Pickle Club*, for it is more of the same, soft-focus American fable. It is not bad, simply unreal, and as clear a picture of American rural life as Morris Men are of Merrie Englande. This is sad since Sandra Dallas has obviously drawn inspiration from her parents' experience of the Depression: the novel is preceded by a reference to the "Fifty-cent Summer" when her father was paid half a dollar for a whole season's work.

Very little of *The Persian Pickle Club* has the bite, the heartbreaking quality, of this brief description. It is too cutesy for me but will appeal to many. Dallas is a good storyteller and is capable of weightier work. She would write better still if she were to dispense with sentiment and the idea that history equals recipes and old wives' tales.

MARY LOUDON

## Testament from a heart of pure evil

In the most horrifying book he has ever read, Marcel Berlins finds some ugly and disquieting truths about the mind and motives of mass-murderer Frederick West

READING this book has been the most unpleasant experience in a long career of book-reviewing. The strong temptation is to advise you to avoid it totally. But it would be wrong to do so. *An Evil Love* is an appalling book — the fault not of the biographer but of his subject — but a necessary one.

What we learn from it is far, far more awful than anything we were told in the reports of Rosemary West's trial. Hitherto our principal guide to the horrors of 25 Cromwell Street. The jury in the case heard four tape recordings made of West's interviews with the police; Geoffrey Wansell listened to 120 such tapes. He read the 100-page memoir that West wrote in prison before he hanged himself on New Year's Day 1995. He was given exclusive access

■ AN EVIL LOVE: The Life of Frederick West  
By Geoffrey Wansell  
Headline, £17.99  
ISBN 0 7472 1760 2

to 15,000 pages of information on West and his crimes.

The details that emerge of West's depraved sexual and homicidal activities — somehow made more disturbing by being set not in some seedy inner city, but near glorious, peaceful Gloucestershire countryside — are too horrifying to summarise here, even in sanitised form. But why is the book needed at all? What purpose is served by recounting the hideous events?

The questions should be put in a different way. On what possible grounds can we argue that — alone of every other mass murderer in

history — West does not require to be investigated and, if possible, explained? Thousands of books have been written trying to understand the inhuman cruelty of the Nazi period; every warped killer of modern times has been subjected to lengthy examination in books and articles, in the hope of finding clues that might help our society better deal with the deviants among us.

Why should West be immune from such scrutiny? Surely not because his crimes were "worse" than those of, say, the Yorkshire Ripper or Dennis Nilsen or Myra Hindley. Indeed, the greater the crimes, the greater the duty to try to come to terms with them, to learn lessons.

West proved particularly difficult to pin down. He was not mad nor suffering from any accepted mental disorder; he was not commanded to do what he did by voices; he did not bear any overwhelming grudge against society; he was not exacting a terrible revenge against women because of the way he had been

treated by them; he was not an addict of drink or drugs; he was not seeking some kind of grotesque fame; he did not subscribe to any dark cultish cause requiring human sacrifice. None of the "usual" reasons for mass killing apply.

He was, though, abnormally fixated on sex; he had himself been sexually abused as a child and had committed incest with both his mother and a sister. To that extent he follows the well-known cycle of abused becoming abuser. That does not, of course, explain the enormity of his depravity. In so many ways West was very ordinary: barely

literate but with a kind of glib charm and a talent for telling plausible lies that enabled him to entice so many young women to 25 Cromwell Street. He was lucky, too, to find a soulmate in Rosemary, almost his equal in sexual deviance: without the explosive chemistry between them, he might not have tortured and killed quite so often (there were certainly many more victims than the 12 to which he admitted).

Wansell assembles the sickening story clearly and dispassionately; in the end, he is forced to accept that there is no explanation for West's deeds other than — and Wansell is well aware of the implications of what he is saying — the presence of pure evil. It is not a comfortable conclusion.

## I spy some big fat lies

Andrew Roberts is not taken in by a 'true' story of wartime espionage

■ OPJB  
By Christopher Creighton  
Simon & Schuster, £14.99  
ISBN 0 684 81786 1

side to what I believe to be a pathetically transparent hoax. Great public servants, such as Churchill and Morton, are effectively accused of conspiracy to help senior Nazis escape justice at Nuremberg. The whole story is laughably crude but some distinguished commentators — such as Milton Shulman, who is offering £20,000 to anybody able to disprove it — have been taken in by the book's absurd claims.

Because the evidence produced is so flimsy, the dates so unspecific and the conspiracy so all-embracing, it is highly unlikely that anybody will be able to collect the money. How, for example, is it possible to prove that King George VI was not personally financing the mysterious (and probably fictional) MI Section, just as his father and brother had before him? Only through common sense and the knowledge of the period, neither of which is discernible in this self-indulgent, badly written and entirely ludicrous book.

Although the author claims to have strangled enemies with his bare hands, I have little to fear from Creighton (aka John Christopher Ainsworth-Davis, aka Christopher Robin). He doubtless believes that I am only rubbishing his book because I am, of course, in the pay of the CIA, KGB and Mossad.

■ Andrew Roberts' novel *The Aachen Memorandum* is available in paperback. However, there is a serious

Churchill: conspirator?

Blunt, the Duke of Windsor and Admiral Canaris and he met Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Rommel and Churchill's spymaster, Sir Desmond Morton. When he was tortured by a sadistic SS officer, it was Morton who swapped his cyanide pill for something harmless. Oh, and Rudolf Hess ate my hamster.

It is truly extraordinary that a reputable publisher such as Simon & Schuster should produce this childlike fantasy as fact.

■ Andrew Roberts' novel *The Aachen Memorandum* is available in paperback.



Coffin break: Martin Rigney and John Donovan, from *Shadows from the Pale* by John Minihan (Secker & Warburg, £20, ISBN 0 436 20347 2), an affectionate portrait in photographs of the Irish town of Athy, Co Kildare

## Outfoxing cinema's master trickster

■ ROSEBUD: The Story of Orson Welles  
By David Thomson  
Little, Brown, £20  
ISBN 0 316 91437 1

ble enigma every bit as teasing as the meaning of Rosebud, his cryptic pay-off in *Citizen Kane*.

He is the actor's actor and the director's director. He was the ultimate theatrical magician, a fraud through and through, a snake-oil salesman with the gift of the gab, a chancer, a stealer of others' talents, a rogue, a bully, a charmer, particularly of women. He is the original wunderkind, a hideously talented man who threw it all away. He remains an insol-



Welles: snake-oil salesman

approach in favour of a quest which is sometimes literary, sometimes filmic, constantly engaging and plausible. He meets trickery with trickery, treating his subject as the

fictional character he had become, dealing with him as if he were a reluctant and hostile witness. He may provide just as few answers as those who have gone before, for there are few certainties with Welles, but in a series of flashes and explosions he makes Welles appear before us, as if we had sent for a ghostbuster.

Have by your side *Kane*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *The Third Man*, *A Touch of Evil* and a video recorder, for Thomson will send you back to check things out. In the scrappy world of cinema biography, that you will be tempted to do so is some trick.

NICHOLAS WAPSHOTT

## Old Austens are still good runners

## The Times Bestseller List

## HARDBACKS

	No	Last	Week	Weeks
1 TO THE HILL Dick Francis (Michael Joseph, £15.99)	0	0	1,919	
2 LONGITUDE Dava Sobel (Fourth Estate, £12)	3	1	1,408	
3 ICON Frederick Forsyth (Bantam, £16.99)	0	0	1,458	
4 DESPERATION Stephen King (Hodder, £16.99)	1	6	1,203	
5 THE BRANDED MAN Catherine Cookson (Bantam, £16.99)	0	0	572	
6 CHARITY Lee Delight (HarperCollins, £16.99)	0	0	563	
7 GUNPOWDER PLOT Anthony Fraser (Weidenfeld, £20)	5	8	521	
8 KEYS TO THE STREET Ruth Rendell (Hutchinson, £15.99)	0	0	495	
9 BEANO BOOK 1997 (D.C. Thomson, £4.99)	3	34	418	
10 WAR WALKS: FROM AGINCOURT TO MANDRICH Richard Holmes (BBC, £16.99)	7	7	387	
11 TOMB OF GOD Richard Andrews (Little, Brown, £20)	2	4	384	
12 THE REGULATORS Richard Bachman (Hodder, £16.99)	0	0	381	
13 STAND BY STAND By Chris Ryan (Century, £15.99)	7	3	372	
14 ENEMY OF GOD Bernard Cornwell (Michael Joseph, £15.99)	0	0	356	
15 PRACTICAL COOKER? Victor Cesarini (Hodder, £16.99)	0	0	337	
16 MARY BERRY'S ULTIMATE CAKE BOOK Mary Berry (BBC, £16.99)	0	0	321	
17 SEVEN SPIRITUAL LAWS OF SUCCESS Deepak Chopra (Bantam, £16.99)	6	15	313	
18 MILLER'S ANTIQUE PRICE GUIDE: 1997 M. & J. H. Miller (Miller, £16.99)	5	17	297	
19 POPCORN Ben Elton (Simon & Schuster, £12.99)	7	2	297	
20 LETTERLAND (HarperCollins, £4.99)	5	16	293	

## PAPERBACKS

	No	Last	Week	Weeks
1 GREEN MILE 6: COFFEY ON THE MILE Stephen King (Penguin, £1.99)	1	1	4,598	
2 NOTES FROM A SMALL ISLAND Bill Bryson (Black Swan, £6.99)	6	2	4,090	
3 THE HORSE WHISPERER Nicholas Evans (Corbs, £5.99)	15	3	2,095	
4 THE OBSESSION Catherine Cookson (Corbs, £5.99)	5	0	2,025	
5 THE HIGHWAY CODE Dept. of Transport (HMSO, £0.99)	5	4	1,967	
6 COLLINS GEM FRENCH DICTIONARY (HarperCollins, £3.99)	40	14	1,946	
7 WINTER KING Bernard Cornwell (Penguin, £5.99)	0	0	1,855	
8 STAR WARS: SHIELD OF LIES Michael P. Kube-McDowell (Bantam, £5.99)	0	0	1,227	
9 COLLINS GEM GERMAN DICTIONARY (HarperCollins, £3.99)	0	0	1,166	
10 SOPHIE'S WORLD Jostein Gaarder (Phoenix, £6.99)	28	6	1,157	
11 COMPLETE THEORY TEST FOR CARS AND MOTORCYCLES Driving Standards Agency (HMSO, £9.99)	25	18	1,036	
12 COLLINS GEM ENGLISH DICTIONARY (CollinsGem, £3.99)	0	0	993	
13 HIDDEN LIVES: A FAMILY MEMOIR Margaret Foster (Penguin, £6.99)	10	5	926	
14 THE GHOST ROAD Pat Barker (Penguin, £6.99)	10	5	914	
15 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (Bloomsbury, £7.99)	3	20	812	
16 GREEN MILE 5: NIGHT JOURNEY Stephen King (Penguin, £1.99)	8	7	801	
17 HIGH FIDELITY Nick Hornby (Faber, £5.99)	23	12	759	
18 BETRAYAL Clare Francis (Pan, £5.99)	10	24	750	
19 A CELESTINE PROPHECY James Redfield (Bantam, £7.99)	40	30	749	
20 DRIVING THEORY TEST QUESTIONS British School of Motoring (Virgin, £2.99)	12	44	744	

## Bloomsbury aims to be Quids in

PENGUIN may have no plans to issue any more 60p mini-books but that has not stopped rival publishers exploiting the seemingly endless demand for cheap editions. Bloomsbury, for instance, celebrates its tenth birthday next month with the issue of *Quids in*, ten elegantly produced titles retailing at £1 each. The famous names in the series include T. C. Coraghessan Boyle, Nadine Gordimer, Will Self and Joanna Trollope.

Impressively independent in an era of media conglomerates, Bloomsbury is one of the publishing successes of the decade. It was founded by four leading publishers — Nigel Newton, Liz Calder, Alan Wherry and David Reynolds — and quickly established a reputation for stylish innovation.

Its headquarters is a late 17th-century house in Soho Square, and its logo — the huntress Diana, whose bows forms the initial B — is as recognisable as Penguin's, or the "it" of Faber & Faber.

Bloomsbury is probably best known for its literary fiction, the responsibility of Liz Calder, and less happily, for Anna Pustelnik's ineradicable *Princess in Love*. Though a commercial and marketing triumph, it divided the directors and dismayed several important authors concerned that Bloomsbury should be associated with such tawdry opportunism.

In 1991, Bloomsbury floated on the Stock Exchange, raising funds for the launch of paperback, reference and children's divisions. And Calder's eye for new talent remains undimmed; last year the little-known David Guterson's

*Snow Falling on Cedars* was an international bestseller.

What differentiates the Quids from other bargain editions is their auratic physicality: each title is a beautiful artefact, in its own right: the paper is thick and creamy, the covers are durable and the dust jackets have been designed by the artist Jeff Fisher. There is nothing superficial about them.

JASON COWLEY

MAUREEN OWEN

New issue at newsagents now or use coupon for bargain sub

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## BOOKS

13

## NEW IN PAPERBACK



Franklin Roosevelt in 1920: lightweight in his youth?

■ IN THE TIME OF THE AMERICANS  
By David Fromkin  
Papermac, £14.99  
ISBN 0 333 63900 6

THERE'S reverence, but not too much, about the way David Fromkin explains his country's rise to power on the world stage and the motivation of the men who took it there.

It's an ambitious task, focusing on the generation whose political coming of age occurred during the First World War and progressing to the day in 1961 when an ageing Eisenhower handed the baton to a new breed, embodied in John Kennedy.

What Fromkin — Professor of History and International Relations at Boston — aims to do is show that the idealistic new democracy did not so much seek to be a prime mover as have that status thrust upon it, and that its leaders sought not gold or glory, but to change the political ways of the world to make it a better place. Fromkin argues his case well in a lucid, dispassionate prose.

He informs his historical

research with details of the personal lives and beliefs of his characters — including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Harry Truman — and while he's not shy of showing their foibles, we discover that the youthful FDR was a cosseted lightweight who drank and cheated, that Eisenhower had a vicious temper and that MacArthur was a domineering mother's boy. Even during Roosevelt's finest hour — the decision to bring the States into the Second World War, securing the allied victory — he's revealed to be shortsighted, forcing Churchill to beg repeatedly for a mere 30 reconstructions of US warplanes prior to the Battle of Britain.

Fromkin paints a complete picture, describing an executive dynasty which, though often naive and not immune to mistakes, took its country from an isolationist stance for what seemed altruistic reasons. How America's interventionist policy then developed was to be out of its hands.

■ THE PENGUIN BOOK OF HISTORIC SPEECHES  
Edited by Brian MacArthur  
Penguin, £9.99 ISBN 0 14 017619 5

DANIEL O'CONNELL, the great 19th-century Irish nationalist, spoke to the multitudes — and they listened. "There was half a million of men," said one old man who was there. "It was a mighty gathering. Everybody heard Dan... He said 'Silence', and silence came to us as the wind upon the barley... but to us all on the edge of the crowd came the speech of Dan O'Connell." In the age of the soundbite, this volume is a fine reminder of the way in which the spoken word can change the world. MacArthur, who edits these pages, starts with Moses and ends with Mandela. The book is organised thematically: the section on the American Civil War is particularly fine. We even get a brief snippet of Edward Everett's two-hour address at Gettysburg; preceding here, as it did then, Lincoln's 270-word Gettysburg Address, it highlights just how extraordinary that little speech was.



■ DON'T CALL IT NIGHT  
By Amos Oz  
Vintage, £5.99  
ISBN 0 09 44900 1

IN A small Israeli town at the edge of the desert, Noa, a teacher of literature, is invited to head a committee which will set up a rehabilitation centre for young drug addicts. Funding for the centre is to come from the father of a pupil who died of a drug overdose. To her surprise, she learns that the boy had felt close to her.

Noa becomes increasingly obsessed while Theo, her partner who is much more experienced in such campaigns, is forced to wait patiently at home. As the frustrated energies of love are pitted against the inertia of intimacy, their shared tensions and tenderness become the focus of a deeply moving novel written with infinite humanity and wisdom.

Contributors: Glyn Brown, Erica Wagner, Jill Waters, Ariadne Birnberg



■ BURY ME STANDING:  
The Gypsies and their Journey  
By Isabel Fonseca  
Vintage, £7.99  
ISBN 0 552 99686 6

FONSECA'S portrait, past and present, of the gypsy diaspora in East and central Europe is a revelation. Set against the contemporary battleground of identity politics and nationalism in the former Soviet bloc, the book opens a window on a vibrant, close-knit and resourceful people who have long sidelined by history, as well as demonised and persecuted by the societies in which they live. Fonseca's agile, truth-seeking narrative unlocks the bolts of ignorance and prejudice, and travels in and out of lives, families, countries and histories. Her book forms a vivid mosaic of Europe's largest and least-known minority.

GILL HORNBY

■ TALES FROM  
WATERSHIP DOWN  
By Richard Adams  
Hutchinson, £14.99  
ISBN 0 09 180164

That was the epic journey to the Down. Fortunately, in the third section, it is to the Down that Adams returns.

The utopia which the rabbits had fought so hard to establish is now up and running. These gentle new tales are not of troubles, more hiccups in paradise — the sort of problems that beset and test any new society. They have to deal with the onset of feminism, in the shape of an Amazonian doe keen to take over the warren. There is the odd disciplinary matter, and still a few territorial issues to be ironed out with their old Efraim foe. But Hazel proves to be a good and wise chief, equal to all these challenges — the Plato of the rabbit world.

Of course, you miss the heroic struggles of the original novel, but it is still a delight to meet these characters again. Adam's style and storytelling is as sure as ever. And who knows? As the full effects of the Newbury bypass are felt on the migratory habits of the Hampshire lapine, perhaps he will find a proper sequel yet.

GILL HORNBY

## Songwriter presents a sick-note

■ PATIENT: The True Story of a Rare Illness  
By Ben Watt  
Viking, £12.50  
ISBN 0 670 87041 2

He was operated on, lost most of his bowel and spent painful weeks in Westminster Hospital's intensive therapy unit becoming more familiar with his wracked body than he might have wished — "I'd always thought 'bowel' was just a colloquial term like 'guts' and meant somewhere near your arse".

Before his luck ran out at 30, Watt and his girlfriend, Tracey, had been the success-

ful songwriting team and band Everything but the Girl. You might have thought that such a gilded youth would have been reduced to a state of whingeing self-pity by this scary illness but Watt is made of particularly fine stuff, possessed of a shining intelligence that allowed him to transcend his horrible circumstances. When he is disconnected from his drips, he feels like "a bathroom being capped off by a plumber".

I cannot think of any book that so clearly describes the gap between sickness and health, the greatest gap that exists between human beings.

Charles Lamb said that sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself. Watt has managed to convey this disturbing rite of passage to a wider audience.

PENNY PERRICK

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London SW7 3DD, England

Cactus Blossom, 1984, from *Pistils*, a collection of flower studies by Robert Mapplethorpe (Jonathan Cape, £60. ISBN 0 224 03783 8)

## Imaginary truths in a state of Grace

Margaret Atwood conjures magic from the story of a notorious 19th-century murder case in Canada, Elizabeth Buchan says

"I AM certain of nothing," wrote Keats, "but... the truth of the imagination."

Two things emerge from the crowded, passionately written text of *Alias Grace*, a fictional reconstruction of the life of a servant girl convicted for murder at the age of 16. First, the belief that, ultimately, the imagination unlocks the door to a richer landscape than an array of facts. Second, truth about any one thing is elusive, never certain and, perhaps, not important. "When you're in the middle of a story," Grace warns us, "it isn't a story at all only confusion. It's only afterwards that it becomes anything like a story."

Both the historian and the novelist

arrange fragments to create a picture, much as Grace creates patterns out of scraps to sew her quilts — a metaphor reflected in the slightly awkward structure of the novel, which includes poems and extracts and encompasses both first- and third-person viewpoints.

One of the notorious figures of her day, Grace Marks was very young and unusually good-looking when, with James McDermott, she was accused of the Montgomery-Kinnear murders in Canada in 1843. McDermott was hanged for the murder of their employer, Kinnear, but Grace's sentence was commuted to 20 years in prison, from where she continued to arouse controversy.

Was she guilty of these vicious killings? Or was she a terrified witness in thrall to the violent bully McDermott? For some, convinced

that women were either incipient hysterics or devils, her guilt was incontrovertible. For others, not. An historian would take into account these contemporary attitudes towards servants and women to join up the space between the dots but this

territory is, necessarily, limited. While not ignoring the social and cultural context — and, as ever, Margaret Atwood's research is a fascinating assembly of domestic and social detail — the author pushes further. In an act of liberation, Grace is allowed to speak for herself and narrate her own version of events to Dr Simon Jordan, who is researching

Margaret Atwood interviewed: Magazine, page 14

Michèle Roberts on how Tim Lott found tentative hope in a family tragedy

## Absolve me, Mother, of your sins

■ THE SCENT OF DRIED ROSES  
By Tim Lott  
Viking, £16  
ISBN 0 670 82460 9

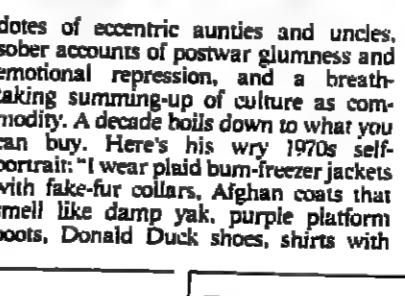


collars like ox tongues. I have an army greatcoat, bell-bottom Wranglers bleached and frayed at the bottoms, fitted leisure shirts from Michael's Men's Boutique in Ealing Broadway."

As we have become accustomed to believing that you shop for a soul, that only spending money equips you with the labels that designate your values and aspirations, it might be worth noting that Lott's mother Jean did not have money of her own, for she belonged to a generation that worked non-stop in the home yet received nothing but sentimental recognition for it.

It is odd, in a book that so passionately analyses the possible causes of identity crisis and terminal depression, to find so little attention paid to gender. Lott recognises only *en passim* that girls of Jean's social class, in the 1940s, were offered particularly prescribed and circumscribed roles as self-denying servers of others, but he does not pursue this fleeting insight. While noting that women's liberation never got to Southall housewives in the late 1960s (though it was expressed by women factory workers of the time, not just privileged intellectuals), he does not appear to see that Jean might have been suffering from what Betty Friedan called the feminine mystique. She might have been full of inexplicable rage about her life as well as love for her husband and children.

Lott is comically deprecating about the money, freedom and treats he took for granted in the 1980s. It is clear that Jean supposed she did not deserve those. Nonetheless, I value this book for its courage, insight and provocation. So few songs write about their mothers that it is marvellous, even if sometimes frustrating, to read one who does.



TIM LOTT'S very intelligently written elegy for a person and a place tells a heart-breaking tale culminating in breakdown and suicide, reveals a few family secrets and appears to be engagingly sincere. Here is a narrator who, if not omniscient, is at least reliable. His triumph is to take tragedy as his subject, and, by exploring it, create a new myth of tentative hope. The reader is harrowed, intrigued, and finally consoled.

Lott's mother Jean killed herself. Nobody could understand why. She was an apparently happy and contented woman, devoted to her husband and sons, filling her retirement years with hobbies and outtings. Some time previously, Lott had suffered from serious depression and had also considered topping himself. When his mother blurted out her anguish to him, just before she died, he felt he failed her by not understanding her desperation. Seeing their sadness somehow intertwined, and feeling in some way culpable, Lott set out to find an explanation for Jean's despair and his own crisis and confusion.

The pattern of his story is woven from his fascination with class, sociology and psychology. Reading this account of upper-working-class life in clean, respectable Southall in west London is like watching a surgeon dissect the heart of middle England, trying to work out why such a strongly pumping organ should weaken and give way.

Lott's great strength is his style. He writes with the imagination of a novelist, the dash of a journalist, the precision of a historian. His family saga, which begins before the Second World War, is told in a mixture of past and present tense, offers a collage of musings on old photographs, critiques of theories of depression, anecdotes

of eccentric aunts and uncles, sober accounts of postwar giddiness and emotional repression, and a breathtaking summing-up of culture as commodity. A decade boils down to what you can buy. Here's his wry 1970s self-portrait: "I wear plaid bum-freezer jackets with fake-fur collars, Afghan coats that smell like damp yak, purple platform boots, Donald Duck shoes, shirts with

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## GOING OUT

## CHILDREN

**LONDON**  
Fun in French  
Six to 11-year-olds are invited to learn beginners' French aided by drama workshops.  
*Le Petit French Frog Club*, Sandmire Road, SW4 (0171-733 5582). Today, 11am-12.30pm; phone for details.

**Jack and the Beanstalk**  
Children's favourite, performed by Piccolo puppets. For three to five-year-olds.  
*Little Angel Marionette Theatre*, Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, NI (0171-226 1787). Today, tomorrow, 11am; £5.

**Rainbow Days**  
Fun trio Bungle, Zippy and George lead the adventures in Nursery Rhyme Land.  
*Hackney Empire*, Mare Street, E8 (0181-985 2424). Ends today, 10.30am and 1.30pm; £4.

**Wheels of Life**  
Educational look at optical toys for ages three and above.  
*Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood*, Cambridge Heath Road, E2 (0181-983 5200). Today, 11am-12.45pm and 2-3.45pm; free.

**Zippo's Circus**  
Gravity-defying acts, plus a dynamic horse show.  
*Stratford Common*, SW16 (0374-811 608 090). Today, 2.30pm, 5pm and 7.30pm; tomorrow, 11am and 2.30pm; £3.50-£8.50.

**REGIONAL**  
**ARUNDEL**  
**Batty About Bats?**  
Bat extravaganza including displays and special bat detectors.



London: Zippy, George and Bungle, of the television series *Rainbow*, lead the Nursery Rhyme adventures at the Hackney Empire

**Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust**, Mill Road (01903 883355). Tomorrow, 9.30am-5.30pm; £2-£4.

**Pestalozzi International Village**, (01424 570444). Today, 11am-5pm; £2.50, concs £1.50.

**Harmony Hill** (01846 678219). Today, 10am-1pm, phone for details.

**REDHILL** (0171-223 2223). Today, 10am-1pm, phone for details.

**STAFFORD** (01785 257698). Today, tomorrow, midday-4.30pm.

**BATTLE** (01423 862000). Festival of Culture. Hot mix of arts, food, crafts, music and dance from Asia and Africa.

**LISBURN** (01232 322222). Saturday Art Club. Series of workshops catering for parents and children. *Harmony Hill Arts Centre*.

**REDHILL** (0171-223 2223). Rumpelstiltskin. Four to eight-year-olds can watch and participate in a theatre performance. *Harequin Theatre*.

**WARRICK QUADRANT** (01737 765547). Today, 11am; £2.50-£3.

## THEATRE

**LONDON**  
**The Flight into Egypt**  
Con O'Neill and Paul Jesson in James Garner's new play, set in wartime Poland. John Dove directs. *Hampstead*, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (0171-722 9301). Tonight, 8pm; mat. 3.30pm.

**Romance**  
British premiere of the 1988 Broadway musical, by Keith Herrmann and Barry Harman, presenting two views of romance: Schnitzler's in turn-of-the-century Vienna and a modern contrast. Stephen Dexter directs. *Brindell*, Brindell Lane, Fleet Street, EC4 (0171-936 3456). Tonight, 7.30pm; mats Sat. 2.30pm, Sun. 4.30pm.

**Sensation**  
Bette Bourne, Beverley Klein and Francois Testory from the 1990 production are joined by Sara Kestelman in Neil Bartlett's fascinating adaptation of Balzac's tale of the last of the castrati. Music by Nicolas Bloomfield.



Critic's Choice: Brian Doherty in *Pentecost*

**PENTECOST**

The Ulster dramatist Stewart Parker, best known as the author of *Spokesmen*, died in 1988 aged just 47. An excellent Irish company, Rough Magic, now comes to London with a later play that should confirm his reputation as a wise, healing voice and a loss both to the theatre and his divided province. His cross-section of troubled, articulate Catholics and Protestants could be too obviously exemplary. Their habitat, a slum house marooned in a sectarian no-man's land during the strike of 1974, could be too blatantly symbolic. But Lyman Parker's production brings place and people tellingly to life.

**BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE**

**Dammar**, Earlham Street, WC2 (0171-369 1732). Tonight, 8pm; mat. 4pm.

**REGIONAL**

**BUXTON** (01264 720100). *Paint Your Wagon*. The New Shakespeare Company takes its production of the catchy Lerner and Loewe musical on tour. With Tony Selby and Claire Carrie. *Opera House*, Water Street (01298 72190). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat. 2.30pm.

**CARDIFF** (01222 230451). *Easy Terms*. Frank Vickery directs his comedy of family ties. *Sherman*, Senghenydd Road, Cardiff (01222 230451). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat. 2.30pm.

**GLASGOW** (0141-552 6690). *Trainspotting*. Harry Gibson's adaptation of Irvine Welsh's best-selling cult novel. Not suitable for children. *Theatre Royal*, Hope Street (0141-332 9000). Tonight, 7.15pm.

**GUILDFORD** (01483 440000). *Hedda Gabler*. Lindy Davies plays the title role in a new production of Ibsen's classic, prior to the West End. With Phyllida Law and Roy Marsden. Directed by Lindy Davies. *Yvonne Arnaud*, Millbrook (01483 440000). Tonight, 8pm; mat. 2.30pm.

**NEWCASTLE** (0191-232 2061). *A Doll's House*. Janet McTeer stars with Owen Teale and John Carlisle in Ibsen's classic drama. *Theatre Royal*, Grey Street (0191-232 2061). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat. 2.30pm.

**DUBLIN** (01-746 6774). *Throwing Mases*. Boston art-rock trio play their new album, *Limbo*. *Olympia Theatre*, Dame Street (01-551 67744). Tonight, 8pm; £10.50.

## POP

**LONDON**  
East 17, Boyzone, Outhere Brothers, Michelle Gayle, Ant and Dec, Louise Pop, soul and rap. Part of the *Top of the Pops* weekend. *Wembley Arena*, Empire Way, HA9 (0181-900 1234). Tonight, 6.30pm; admission £16.

**Paul Jones and Dave Kelly Blues and R&B from the singer/harmonica player Jones and slide guitarist Kelly from the Blues Band. *Watermans Arts Centre*, High Street, Brentford (081-568 1176). Tonight, 10.30pm; £8.**

**Kala Marks** Bolivian folk group. *The Spitz*, Commercial Street, E1 (0171-247 9749). Tomorrow, 5pm; £5.

**Totó La Momposina**, Celia González. Culmination of the *Colores de Colombia* weekend. A programme of singing and dancing, mixing African, native Indian and Spanish music. *Barbican Hall*, Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £7.50.

**CRITIC'S CHOICE**  
**JAMES BLOOD ULMER** His profile has dipped somewhat since 1994, when he released no less than three albums, and he has a worrying habit of arriving on stage late. But never underestimate the capacity of guitarist and singer James Blood Ulmer to pin an audience to the spot with his high-voltage mix of jazz, blues, funk and "harmonica" music. His singing betrays the influence of Jimi Hendrix, but the 54-year-old veteran's intense, "out there" style of playing was more obviously forged in the crucible of 1970s American fusion music, notably that of Ornette Coleman in whose band Ulmer played from 1974 to 1977.

**DAVID SINCLAIR** *Jazz Café*, 5 Parkway, London NW1 (0171-344 0048). Tomorrow, 9pm; £12.50.

**REGIONAL**  
**ASHBURTON** (01344 812422). *Davey Arthur and Co*. Irish folk singer, formerly with the Fureys. *The Lanterns*, Knowle Hill (01364 652697). Tonight, 8pm; £4.

**BIRMINGHAM** (0121-703 5250). *Ruby Turner*. Birmingham's soul diva sings the standards. *Ronnie Scott's*, Broad Street (0121-643 5425). Tomorrow, 8pm; £15.

**BRIERLEY HILL** (0121-464 5566). *Ruby Turner*. See Birmingham. *Robin Hood Inn*, (01344 456679). Tonight, 8pm; £6.50-£7.

**NEWCASTLE** (0191-232 2061). *A Doll's House*. Janet McTeer stars with Owen Teale and John Carlisle in Ibsen's classic drama. *Theatre Royal*, Grey Street (0191-232 2061). Tonight, 7.30pm; mat. 2.30pm.

**DUBLIN** (01-746 6774). *Throwing Mases*. Boston art-rock trio play their new album, *Limbo*. *Olympia Theatre*, Dame Street (01-551 67744). Tonight, 8pm; £10.50.

**BOOK**  
**LONDON** Geoffrey Hazard Extracts from the poet's latest work. *Torrano Meeting House*, Torrano Avenue, NW5 (0171-267 2751). Today, 7.30pm; £2, concs £1.

**REGIONAL**  
**EDINBURGH** (0131-225 9000). *Pub Tour*. Zany tour led by professional actors from

## FARNHAM

**Footworks Folk Dance Festival** An exciting line-up of Eastern European, English, French and cajun music from Caravansera, Committee Band, On Bouge and Joli Blon. *The Maltings*, Farnham (01252 726234). Tonight, 7.30pm; £5.

**GALWAY** (0171-223 2223). *Levellers*. Brighton-based folk-rock festival favourites. *Leisureland*, Salthill (01 353 91 521 455/564 196). Tonight, 8pm; £12.50.

**GLASGOW** (0141-552 6690). *Red Snapper*. Jazz and funk-influenced techno. *King Tuts Wah Wah Hut*, St Vincent Street (0141-221 5279). Tomorrow, 8.30pm; £5.50.

**LEICESTER** (0116-255 3956). *Trasian Sistras*. Crafted pop from Scotland.

*The Charlotte*, Oxford Street (0116-255 3956). Tonight, 8pm; £5.

**LEEDS** (0113-258 1177). *Edinburgh*. The Beehive Inn, The Grassmarket (0131-554 0777). Tonight, 6pm, tomorrow, 1pm and 8pm; £5.50.

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## GOING OUT

15

## GALLERIES

**LONDON**  
Assembling the Family  
An exploration of the genre of  
National Portrait Gallery,  
St Martin's Place, WC2 (0171-  
306 0055). Today, 10am-6pm;  
tomorrow, midday-6pm; free.

## CRITIC'S CHOICE

**BLUMENFELD**  
Erwin Blumenfeld's fame as a  
fashion photographer for *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* has  
obscured his many other talents and the  
complex personality behind them. His "fetish of beauty", as  
the subtitle of this comprehensive  
retrospective has it, is certainly  
visible throughout his long career,  
but is accompanied by an ob-  
session with themes of sleep and  
death, grounded in his First  
World War experiences. The  
show also makes great play with  
the collages, drawings and texts of his Dada time, which offer a  
less reassuring image. Blumenfeld's great period was from 1938,  
when Cecil Beaton introduced  
him to *Vogue* and he was imme-  
diately put under contract, to the  
1950s, when he became less fash-  
ionable and went back to his  
more experimental work. There  
are gorgeous pictures of the  
grand and the glamorous, but  
many that are quite unexpected.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

**Barbican Art Gallery**,  
Barbican Centre, London  
EC2 (0171-588 9023). Today,  
10am-6.45pm, tomorrow  
midday-6.45pm; £4.50.

**Literati: Mark Gerson**  
Famous portraits from the  
world of literature.  
**National Portrait Gallery**,  
St Martin's Place, WC2 (0171-  
306 0055). Today, 10am-6pm;  
tomorrow, midday-6pm; free.



In fashion: Blumenfeld portrait, 1939, on show at the Barbican, London

## Gravitas

Platon and Peter Sanderson's  
innovative project using fashion  
photography and graphics.  
**Hamiltons Gallery**,  
Carlos Place, W1 (0171-499  
9493). Today, 10am-6pm; free.

## Richard Wilson: Jamming Gears

Inspiring site-specific work.  
**Serpentine Gallery**,  
Kensington Gardens, W2  
(0171-402 6075). Today, tomorrow,  
10am-6pm; free.

## ■ REGIONAL

**BIRMINGHAM**  
Eve Arnold: In Retrospect  
Work spanning 40 years from  
Magnum's finest photojournalist.  
**Ikon Gallery**,  
John Bright Street (0121-643  
0708). Today, 11am-6pm; free.

## DURHAM

**Bill Viola**  
Site-specific work from the  
master of the video spectacle.  
**Durham Cathedral**,  
Palace Green (0191-384  
3720/396 4266). Today, tomorrow,  
phone for times; free.

## EDINBURGH

**Alberto Giacometti**  
Comprehensive survey of  
work by one of art's greats.  
**Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art**,  
Bellord Road (0131-556 8921).  
Today, 10am-5pm, tomorrow,  
2.30pm; £4, concs £2.50.

## Callum Innes

Series of paintings by the  
abstract artist.  
**Inverleith House Royal Botanic Gardens**,  
Inverleith Row (0131-552 7171).  
Today, tomorrow, 10am-5pm;  
free.

## Leeds: David Nash

Prominent artist's sculptures  
from wood.  
**Henry Moore Institute**,  
The Headrow (0113-246 7467).  
Today, tomorrow, 10am-5.30pm;

## ST IVES

## Mark Rothko in Cornwall

Rothko's work in context with  
Patrick Heron, Peter Lanyon and other St Ives artists.

## St Ives Tate Gallery

Porthmeor Beach (01736  
79626). Today, 11am-7pm;  
tomorrow, 11am-5pm; £3.

## RELIGION

**Chilcott, of the Kings Singers, will be joining the choir.**  
**Church of the Ascension**,  
Burghclere (two miles south of Newbury) (01635  
278470). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £5.

## ■ REGIONAL

## CHICHESTER

## In honour of the Holy Cross weekend, Chichester

Cathedral is holding a special celebratory service on

Saturday to highlight the unity of the Cross with God. Representatives from parishes and deaneries across

Britain will be present.

The service will begin at midday and features a 10ft by 6ft high Cross built like a

jigsaw. Dr Eric Kemp, the

Bishop of Chichester, will put

the final unifying piece in

place.

**Chichester Cathedral**,  
(01273 421021). Today,  
midday.

## ■ GLOUCESTERSHIRE

## Fretherne with Saul

As part of the Civic Trust "Heritage Days" on

September 14 and 15, the

church of Saint Mary the

Virgin will be holding a

Victorian evening. Starting at

6pm on Sunday, the

congregation will be dressed

in period costume to

match the age of this 19th-

century church which also

features original Victorian

glass and an ornate

painted ceiling.

**Saint Mary the Virgin**,  
Severnside (01452 740671).

Today and tomorrow;  
Victorian evening

tomorrow, from 6pm.

## ■ LEEDS

## Brother Jack McDuff

Soul-jazz Hammond

organist.

**Yardbird Suite Jazz Club**,

The Underground, TBC

Club, Cookridge Street (0113-230  
2659). Tonight, 8.30pm; £7.

## ■ HAWICK

## Tom White and His Shoestring Band

Cravvel-voiced

stonemason-cum-bluester.

**Melgund Bar**,

O'Connell Street (01450  
372547). Tonight, 8pm; £3.50.

## ■ NEW RELEASES

## L'Amore Misto (15)

A woman grapples with

her mother's bizarre death.

Compelling and stylish

psychological drama from

Italian director Mario

Martone.

**MGM Swiss Centre** (0171-  
439 4470)

## ■ OPERA

## Don Giovanni

Travelling Opera stages

Mozart's black comedy.

**Barbican Hall**,

Barbican Centre, EC2

(0171-638 8899). Tonight,  
7.30pm; £12.50-£19.

## ■ FILM

## Films in London and

(where indicated with the

symbol ◊) on release

across the country

## ■ CHICHESTER

## Lock Up Your Daughters

Sheila Hancock and George

Cole star in a revival of

the musical that is based on

Henry Fielding's *Rape Upon*

*Rape*. Box office: 01243 781312.

## ■ REGIONAL

## LEATHERHEAD

Sep 19-Oct 5

Night Must Fall

Jason Donovan stars

opposite Hayley Mills in

a new production of the

thriller by Emily Williams at the

Thordene Theatre. Box office:

01273 377677.

## ■ CHICHESTER

## Oct 10-Nov 2

**Marlene**

Stan Phillips plays the title

role of Marlene Dietrich in this

new play by Pam Gems, which is directed by Sian

Mathias. Box office: 0161-  
624 2829.

## ■ PLYMOUTH

## Sep 26-Oct 5

**The Substance of Fire**

Jon Robin Baitz's highly

acclaimed American drama

receives its British premiere

at the Drum, Theatre Royal, Plymouth. Box office:

01752 267222.

## COMING SOON



London: Robert Mapplethorpe's work at the Hayward Gallery

5

## JAZZ

**LONDON**  
Ruby Braff Quartet  
Bostonian cornet veteran with guitarist Howard Alden, *Plaza Express*, Dean Street, W1 (0171-439 8722). Tonight, tomorrow, 9.15pm; £25.

## CRITIC'S CHOICE

**ANNIE ROSS**  
A consummate interpreter of ballads and pioneer of that scintillating new kind of "vocalese", Annie Ross has combined a singing career with adventurous roles on stage and screen. She is ensconced in the Green Room for a three-week residency, accompanied by a trio featuring pianist Colin Purbrook, *CHELVE DAVIS*



Essex: Jazz veteran Acker

Bilk plays at Blue Mills

**Roberto Pla's Latin Jazz Ensemble**  
Latin jazz 12-piece. *Jazz Cafe*, Parkway, NW1 (0171-344 0449). Tonight, 7pm; £12.

## ■ REGIONAL

**ASCOT**  
Spike Robinson  
Sweet-toned American tenor pairing with pianist Richard Buskiewicz. *Busk's Head*, Lonsdale Road, SW13 (0181-576 5241). Tomorrow, 8pm; £15.

## ■ CHESTER

**Gary Potter Quartet**  
Gypsy jazz guitarist with bass legend Herbie Flowers. *Django Bates*, drummer Dave Trigwell and trumpeter Mark Jackson. *Alexander's Jazz Theatre*, Rufus Court (01244 340005). Tomorrow, 8pm; £4.

## ■ EDINBURGH

**Blacktan'd**  
Soul-jazz and funk outfit featuring guitarist Kevin Mackenzie.

## Ruth Gledhill rose at dawn, but did not meet the Hindu holy woman

## A broken date with the deity

## AT YOUR SERVICE

## ★ A five-star guide ★

**PRIEST:** Swaminathan Swacharya

**ARCHITECTURE:** Nothing but a ghostly shell remains of this former church

**SERMON:** None here, although most

temple services include a talk on the

# Nomads gather for a party feast

Feather Report

NEARLY everyone who has a garden knows the song thrush, even though its numbers have declined recently. The mistle (or missel) thrush is another story. It is a larger, shyer bird, with bolder spots on the breast, and white underwings that flash as it flies up. It looks almost as big as a pigeon or sparrowhawk when it is flying.

This is the one time of year when you see mistle thrushes in groups, rather than alone or in pairs. Loosely-knit family parties gather to feed on playing fields or other open stretches of grass. They are nomadic birds in the latter part of the year, but when one of them finds a holly tree covered with berries, or a wall adorned with ivy coming into fruit, it will make this the centre of a small territory and defend it against other mistle thrushes and blackbirds.

However, they are not hasty or greedy. At first, they will feed mainly on insects or other small creatures in the area around the holly or the ivy. They will keep the berries until later in the year, when the ground is hard or covered

with snow and other food is inaccessible.

They chase off their rivals fiercely but silently. It is only when a large invading party comes along that you hear a lot of noise, with all of them making their rasping, churring calls.

Their song is much more beautiful. It is a wild outburst of notes, delivered usually from the top branch of a tall tree. But it has an oddly abrupt ending each time, as though the singer had been cut off. Song thrushes begin singing, at any rate in the south of England, some time in November, but mistle thrushes are not much heard before Christmas. They continue singing up to midsummer, but I always think of their song as a winter song.

DERWENT MAY  
• What's about *Birds* — Listen for many birds calling to establish their winter territories. *Twitters* — lesser grey shrike, Burnham Overy, Norfolk; greenish warbler, Filey, North Yorkshire; buff-breasted and pectoral sandpipers. *Abbercon reservoir, Essex*. Details from Birdline (0891 700222) 40p a min cheap rate. 50p at other times.

PETER BROWN



Mistle thrushes are larger and shyer than their cousins

Clean, friendly, inquisitive and easy to tame: the gerbil is a strong contender for the perfect first pet

I.R.BEAMES/ARCEA



From the arid regions of Africa and Asia, gerbils have been popular in Britain since the 1960s. But beware, that male and female you bought for company will breed every three weeks

## Homely oasis for a desert rat

Fifteen years ago Jackie Roswell was given a gerbil as a present. Today she has 150 of them in her Surrey home — and the number is still rising. If anxious parents see this as a warning, they should note that Mrs Roswell's brood was no accident. She planned to have that many gerbils, keeping them for either breeding or

showing. However, it is true that the gerbil can be a prolific creature.

"Gerbils make brilliant pets," says Linda Walker, the keeper in charge of the Children's Zoo at London Zoo, where the pet care centre has a small number in a big glass tank. "They are fascinating animals to keep and to watch. They are active by day and

night, they are very clean and don't smell, and they are easily handled — that is, as long as you are gentle with them and you start handling them when they are young."

Never pick them up by the tail, though, because it can come away in your hand, an escape mechanism which the animals use in the wild if another creature tries to get hold of them. It can only be used once, though, because the tail does not grow back.

Gerbils have only been kept as pets in Britain since the 1960s. In the desert and semi-desert conditions of Africa and central Asia there are more than 80 different species of this rodent, although the most popular one in Britain is the Mongolian gerbil because it is friendly, inquisitive and easy to tame.

An average price for a young gerbil, either bought from a pet shop or a breeder, is £4. Mrs Roswell, who is the secretary of the National Gerbil Society, a 150-member organisation which has a Web site (see box) and links with similar organisations abroad, recommends buying a gerbil between six to eight weeks of age. At this stage, it is old enough to be separated from its parents but young enough to be tamed quite easily.

The Golden Agouti, sandy in colour with dark hairs down the length of its spine, is the most popular variety, but there are many other colours including black and white.

Because they are such sociable creatures, it is best to keep two or more in a cage rather than just one, but there can be problems. Females from the same litter are better disposed towards each other than males. Introducing adults of either sex from different litters is not advised because they will fight. An adult is any gerbil older than 13 weeks, and the best age to introduce new animals is eight weeks.

If you want to breed gerbils then make the obvious match but be warned: they start early at between eight and 12 weeks. Females come into season for only a few hours roughly every six days.

Pregnancy itself lasts just over three weeks but after giving birth the female will come into season again immediately. The female's reproductive life varies from seven to 20 months. An average litter size is four to six while the maximum number of litters is usually about ten.

At home, gerbils can either live in a plastic-bottomed cage with wire top and sides, or in what is termed a gerbilarium, a large aquarium tank with wire mesh cover, which can be bought new for about £30. The latter has the advantage of allowing owners easy observation of these busy little animals and, because they love digging and burrowing, it stops their bed from spilling all over the floor.

That bed should be six to eight inches in depth and made from wood shavings and dry peat or recycled paper (ink from newspaper may poison them). The Children's Zoo at London Zoo keeps its gerbils in a mixture of peat and sand. Avoid very fine sawdust because it might affect their ears and eyes. The depth gives them plenty of scope to tunnel. Cages should be placed out of direct sunlight and away from draught.

Nothing to remember is how adept gerbils are at the art of escape. One

young owner, Tom Borterill, remembers only too clearly his disappointment some years ago when he returned from school to find that his two male gerbils had burrowed out of their run in the garden.

In the desert gerbils don't get much water so they take very little when they are kept as pets. A water bottle on the side of the cage is preferable to a dish in the cage, which may well get buried by tunnelling. Always keep the water fresh.

Gerbils excrete little, so the need for cleaning out their home is greatly reduced. Once every three or four weeks should be adequate, although a thorough wash of the cage or gerbilarium with soapy water is recommended about three times a year.

Mrs Roswell says gerbils should always have a piece of wood in their cage to gnaw on, while cardboard tubes give them hours of endless tunnelling pleasure. A toilet roll tube chewing contest is often on the agenda at gerbil shows, so your cardboard may not last that long.

Gerbils are generally healthy creatures — sore noses from bar chewing is the most common complaint — with an average lifespan of three years. "For me, their endearing traits are when they stand on their hind legs and look around and when they groom each other. One will do the grooming and the other will lie back and enjoy it," Mrs Roswell says.

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

TEL: 0171 680 6113 PAMPERED PETS FAX: 0171 782 7930

### GENERAL

#### Looking for a puppy?

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We have hundreds of litters available throughout the UK.

Phone for your list of breeders:  
0181 580 8182

Petplan  
Puppy line

### CATS

LOST: *West Special* Cat - lost the last few days. Tel: 01777 348562.

STOURCASTLE: Bengal cat, male, 10 months old, last seen in Stourbridge, Shropshire. Tel: 01584 242950 (Miss Sophie).

LOST: *West Special* Cat - lost the last few days. Tel: 01777 348562 (Miss Sophie).

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## TRAVEL

Christmas holidays: A four-page festive special starts with the splendours of Prague and deserted Venice

## In love with a cold climate

There never was a King Wenceslas, good or otherwise. The 10th-century Duke of Bohemia of that name must, however, have been a pretty decent fellow, since Prague's vast 600-year-old central square is named after him, and his statue crowns its sensational vista.

I had coffee (with whipped cream, it goes without saying, in this increasingly sybaritic city) at the swirly Art Nouveau Grand Hotel Europa, where it had been worth fighting for a seat to get a window position. From there — on the Feast of Stephen, Boxing Day — I could look out on the snow which lay round about the square, reasonably crisp and even, though not excessively deep.

Vaclav's namestí (its Czech name) was swarming with tourists, all paying no attention whatever to traffic rules. When I first visited the square, before the Communists were evicted in 1989, one of the grimly authoritarian police tried to arrest me for crossing in the wrong place.

Now — as I found on returning to the city on an eminently civilised, art-orientated, Christmas tour — in Vaclav Havel's Czech Republic almost anything goes.

But not all manifestations are attractive. Western commercialism has embellished too many of Prague's stunning buildings with tawdry advertisements for multinational consumer products.

Wenceslas Square is lined with shops selling junk. A handsome mid-18th-century pink-faced baroque palace has been turned into the Black Jack casino.

The city's taxi-drivers would win an Olympic gold medal for rapacious rip-offs, their meters whizzing brazenly round like roulette wheels gone berserk.

I got to the stage where I ignored the demanded fare and paid what I thought the trip had been worth, a course of action which met with only token expostulation from the ruffian-like drivers.

Yet if liberty has bedizened the pretties of European capital cities with such ultracommercialism that even ambulances are sponsored, the end of Communism has meant that the Czechs can now welcome visitors with attractive hotels and with a huge choice of acceptable restaurants, instead of the former dour handful of eating places where patrons were lucky to find even a few offerings.

Prague, in fact, now has all the appurtenances needed to please tourists. Including shops worth shopping in — for Bohemian glass and the local speciality of garnet jewellery.

But the greatest pleasure is, of course, Prague itself. Look down from the heights of the vast, fairytale castle and you see a city of spires and towers scattered on either side of Smeana's Vltava river. The view, more dazzling than that of Florence (with green roofs instead of the Tuscan red), is made even more wondrous by winter's white ornamentation. Wander around the castle and



On guard in the city

### FACT FILE

■ Martin Randall Travel, 10 Barley Mow Passage, London W4 (0181-742 3355) will run a trip to Prague from December 21-27 at a cost of £1,240 per person sharing. The price includes return flights on Czech Airlines, taxes, some taxis, trains, metro and coaches; a full programme of visits to churches and museums in Prague and also, beyond, to villa Trola, Koln Hora and a country house.

Guided by the lecturer Jarl Kremel and accompanied by a Czech escort (admission charges and tips, art history notes and a detailed itinerary are also included in the price); £88 in the 4-star Hotel Grand

Bohemia, in Prague's old town; also four dinners and two restaurant lunches.

■ Further information: the Czech Tourist Office (0171-794 3263) can advise on accommodation and arrange bookings.

its purities, which include the gloomily Gothic St Vitus's cathedral (started in 1344, finished in 1929) and the National Art Gallery, with its unparalleled collection of medieval paintings. Among these, a gorgeous seven-section Annunciation provoked me into planning an art-heist.

Saunter down the castle hill, by way of the Malá Strana (the Small Quarter) and cross the Vltava by the Charles Bridge, a spectacle in itself, girt with vendors' stalls, is a Cent-

ral European Ponte Vecchio. Venture into the baroque St Nicholas's church, so fanciful you feel as if you are inside a wedding cake.

And then you are in Old Town Square, where the intoxicating medley of buildings includes the best glass shop in town and the house where Kafka is said to have lived as a teenager. The square's huge space, filled with more market stalls, in December is adorned with a huge, bossy Christmas tree surrounded by smaller, humbler ones: the leaves of all of them laden with genuine, as distinct from tinsel, snow. A jazz band brightens things up even further. Return at night, when floodlighting makes the snow-bedecked scene magical.

A few minutes' walk away — Prague is a city for walking — is an area where Christmas is not celebrated and which, first under the Nazis and then under the Communists, for half a century was not allowed to celebrate anything else: Josefov, the oldest surviving Jewish quarter in Europe.

**F**reedom has vulgarised even this place, which is over-protected by thuggish young security men who do not permit access to, or even photography of, the ancient cemetery, with its thousands of tombstones.

Even so, the place manages to be beautiful and moving. The quaint 13th-century Old-New synagogue persisted in maintaining worship under the Communists. On the walls of the more imposing 16th-century Pinkas synagogue are inscribed the names of thousands of Nazi victims.

Even with grim memories of the past, it is impossible to be sad for long in Prague. If all else fails to lift the spirit, the music will succeed. At Christmas, in the castles, churches and palaces, there is music everywhere: Smetana, Dvorak, Janacek and Martinu, of course, but also unexpected composers. One concert poster promised Telemann, Bach and Berlin. The work by Berlin (arranged by P Cibous) was a little item called *White Christmas*.

Above all, there is Mozart. For while the Salzburg that made Mozart miserable in his lifetime now exploits him voraciously, Amadeus was cosseted in Prague where exteriors for the film of Peter Shaffer's play were filmed. At the Bertramka, a villa now turned Mozart museum, *Don Giovanni* was completed. The night before the dress rehearsal, its composer dined at

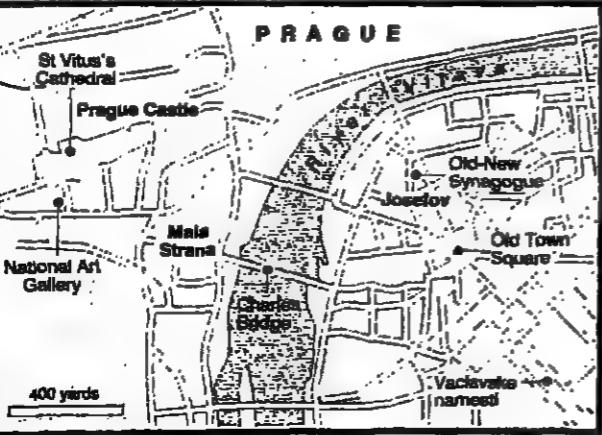
Count Thun's palace, now the British Ambassador's residence. At the Estates theatre, *Don Giovanni* received its world premiere.

Prague has three opera houses. The 19th-century State Opera is rococo run amok, with gold leaf, white stucco, caryatids — you name it, they've got it. The National Opera House is gilded, angelled and frescoed to within an inch of its life.

At the Estates, a dinky little auditorium built in 1783 and a marvel of green and gold, I saw the next best thing to *Don Giovanni*: an imaginative production of *The Magic Flute*. I finished off the evening at the Pod Kralen restaurant, a luxurious place (though, by Western standards, without luxuries) of

Take my tip. Instead of dreaming of Berlin's *White Christmas*, experience one among the snow-covered spires of Prague. It can be very cold but the welcome in these democratic days is warm.

**GERALD KAUFMAN**  
• The author was a guest of Martin Randall Travel



## Unmistakable Venetian class

We had been to an evening concert at the church of San Samuele across the Grand Canal from Ca' Rezzonico, the baroque palace, once the home of Robert Browning and now the museum of 18th-century Venice. It was our first night and we had listened the young violins of Interpreti Veneziani playing glorious Bach and Vivaldi but now it was time to return to our hotel.

It was January 5. Venice was deserted. Only a few Venetians, huddled against the cold, stood awaiting the vaporetto back to St Mark's. Snow started to fall and we chugged along the canal — surely one of the world's finest journeys — with snow flakes falling against a moonlit sky and the backdrop of one of Venice's greatest icons, the church of Santa Maria della Salute.

On such nights there is grandeur about Venice that no other city on earth can match. It is truly magical — but pity can match. The journalist who dares to try to stand comparison with Henry James, Mary McCarthy or James Morris in capturing its glory, Morris evokes the Venice I experienced in January: "All is dark, experienced for a swirling, desolate. If you stand still for a sudden moment, allowing the echo of your steps to retreat around a corner, you will hear only the sad slapping of the willow on a tethered boat, the distant water on a deep boom of clangling of a fog bell, or the deep boom of

red and green and gold among the elegant Christmas decorations lingering in the shop windows, many advertising sales.

It is Mary McCarthy who understands another of Venice's most potent spells — its power to awaken the philistine drowsing in the sceptic's breast. There are so few tourists in January that there are no queues for the great museums, the smaller churches can be admired in solitude and there are seats in Florian's and Quadri's, even Harry's Bar (where the pasta is delicious but stunningly expensive). The streets of the Dorsoduro can be walked without encountering many Venetians let alone tourists. On my previous visit to the Accademia, we had to queue for an hour. In January we walked

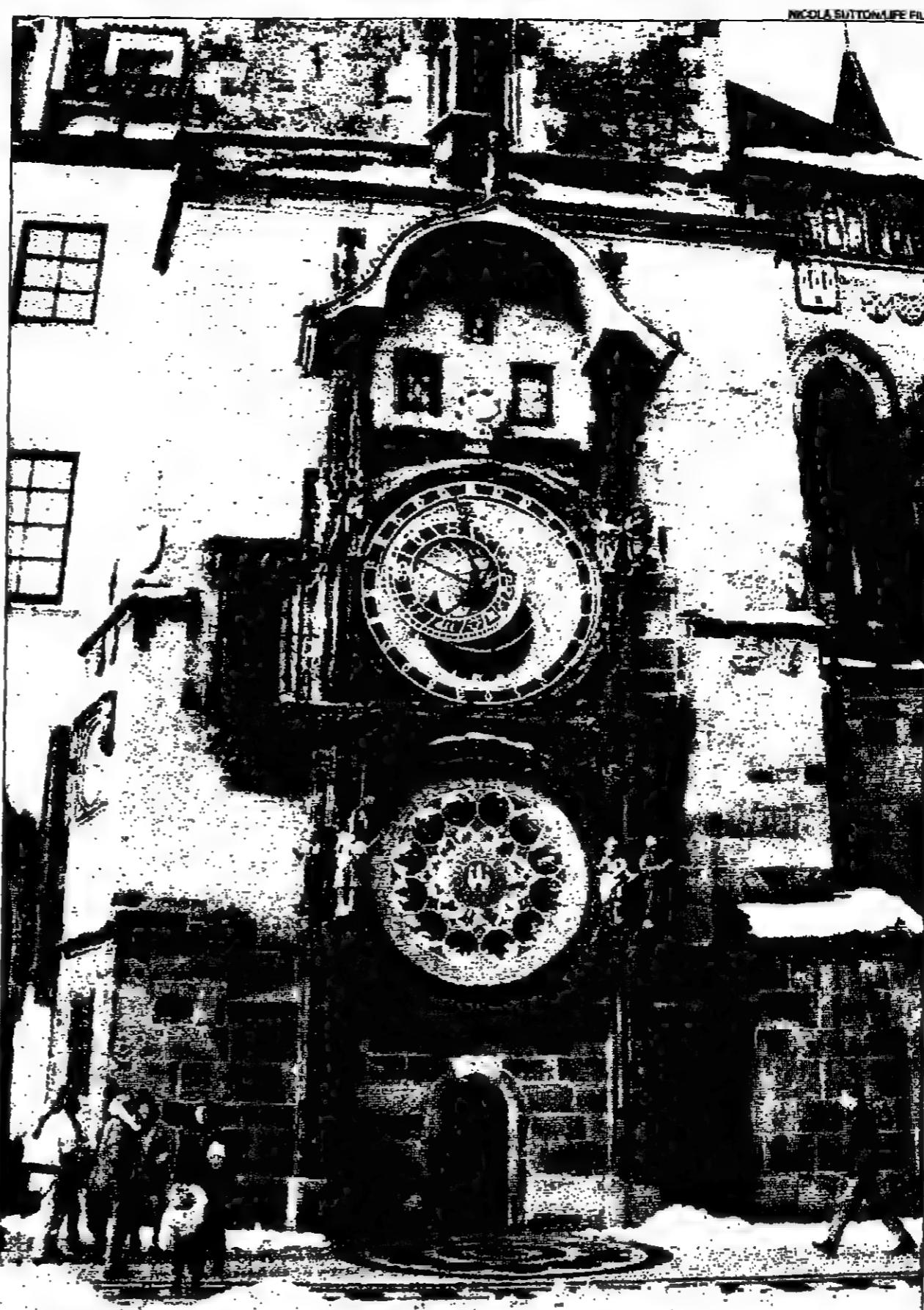
straight in and were able to appreciate Tiepolo, Tintoretto, Giorgione and Carpaccio without being jostled. We enjoyed the churches of Santa Maria dei Miracoli, San Pantalon or the Tintoretto's mighty Crucifixion in the Scuola Grande as if being given a private view.

Many restaurants were preparing to close for their brief holiday before the Carnival but it was easy to book in those that were still open. The Ristorante della Buona Accoglienza Venezia (RBAV) group — 12 restaurants dotted along the Grand Canal — was a revelation, each small, cheerful, used mainly by locals, and serving decently priced, authentic Venetian food. We particularly enjoyed the Alla Madonna near the Rialto, where there always seems to be a queue, and the Vini da Gugli near the Ca' d'Oro.

Snow fell only briefly, it was cold and we suffered intermittent rain but the duckboards only added to our sense of adventure. After Christmas and New Year, Venice in January made a perfect overture to the weeks of work ahead.

**BRIAN MACARTHUR**

• The author was a guest of Thomson (0171-201 9000). He stayed at the five-star Luna Baglioni behind St Mark's Square where two nights B&B costs £305 per person, including flights and transfers, £355 in January and February. Weekend breaks start from £205. Go As You Please holidays also arranged.



The town hall in Prague's Old Square which is best seen at night, when floodlighting makes the snow magical

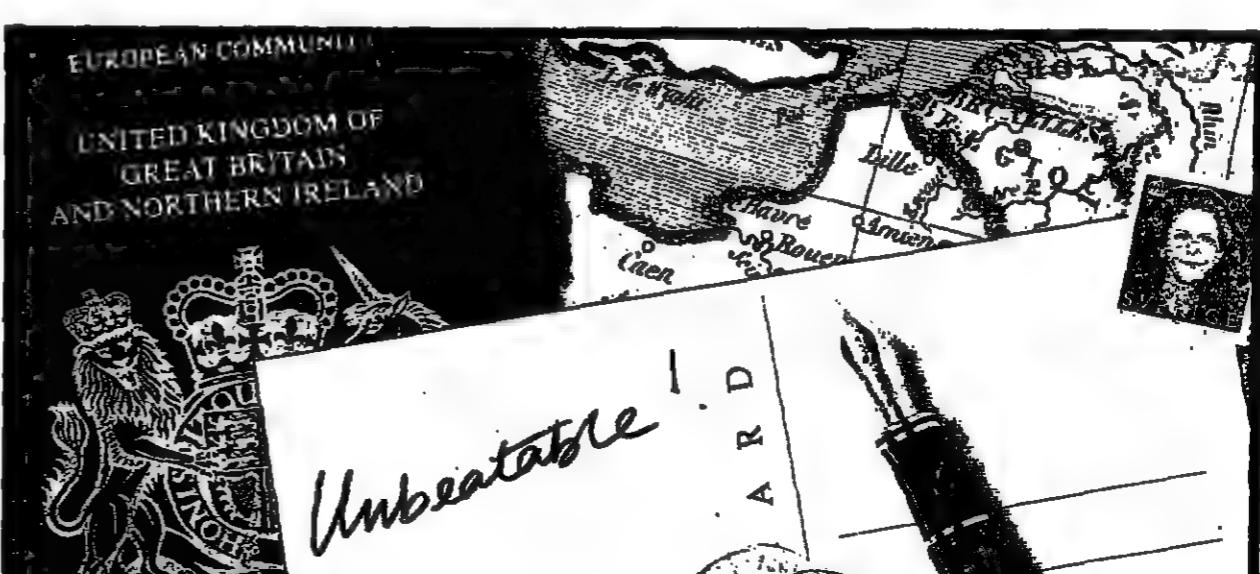
**TRAVEL DIRECTORY**

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Anthony Holden on the very British island of Anguilla  
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**AUSTRIA**  
Festive shopping to Mozart in Salzburg and Vienna  
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**MADEIRA**  
From lush subtropical to magnificent mountain scenery  
PAGE 23

**TRAVEL TIPS, PAGE 20**



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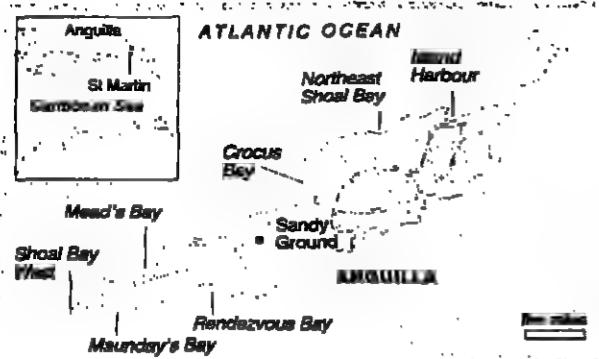
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## TRAVEL

Caribbean: The British colony in the Leeward Islands that more than merits the superlatives heaped on it

# God save the Queen, I'll have Anguilla



**N**ot a shot was fired, but the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, felt obliged to send in the troops, who landed to find that the natives were friendly. Friendly enough to welcome them with a chorus of *God Save the Queen*, while raising the Union Jack in an endearing spirit of defiance.

Anguilla, you may recall, is the tiny Caribbean island which did its zany bit for the Swinging Sixties by staging a revolution against independence from Britain.

An Ealing comedy come true, Wilson's "Bay of Piglets" had as happy an ending, with the rebel handful remaining loyal subjects of the Crown as was their wish, rather than submit to the sway of their big-brother neighbours, St Kitts and Nevis, with whom they had been yoked for centuries by successive colonial regimes.

Thirty years on, its people

are friendlier than ever, and this British Crown colony, now the proud possessor of its own constitution and parliament, is itself the jewel in the British Leeward Islands' crown. Only 16 miles long and at most three wide, it has 30 dazzlingly white beaches along its 45-mile coastline, facing north and east to the Atlantic, south and west to the Caribbean.

Of the dozen and more Caribbean islands I have visited, Anguilla is the collector's item I would rather keep to myself. So tiny a place can scarcely bear the weight of the superlatives it merits: not just the nicest people for leagues around, but the quietest and most beautiful beaches, the most luxurious hotels, the widest range of haute cuisine restaurants — at high, but not the highest, prices.

Anguilla is even more beguiling, while less chi-chi and expensive, than nearby St



Mead's Bay on Anguilla, one of 30 dazzlingly white beaches along its 45-mile coastline. The bay is overlooked by the Malliouhana, one of the best hotels in the Caribbean

Barthélémy, alias "St Barth's" (or, to tell the truth, Mahatma-sur-Mer). So tranquil is Anguilla, so free of the parish bustle and teeming tourism of larger islands, that the day trip to next-door St Martin only makes you long to get back. The 40-minute hop from

Antigua is more than worth the extra burst of energy after the ten-hour flight from London. But for all Anguilla's touching devotion to the Queen, who dropped in for a day in 1994, absurdly few Britons make the effort: little more than 2,000 a year, or barely 6 per cent of Anguilla's 35,000 annual visitors.

Some may have been deterred by false memories of the 1960s "revolution", more by the after-effects of 1995's Hurricane Luis. But Anguillians, as a member of their tourist board didn't need to tell me, are "a very resilient people". With few exceptions, the main hotels and restaurants are all back in business, in better shape than ever.

What used to be the Casablanca, where the Queen stayed for one night during that recent visit, has recently become the Sonesta Beach Resort, a Moroccan-style style in a superb setting on Rendezvous Bay West, looking south towards St Martin. The Coccoioba was still in poor shape when I visited, but the celebrated Cap Juluca on Maunday's Bay has made a



A tiny island with many palms

## ANGUILLA FACT FILE

■ Caribbean Connection (01244 341131) offers packages from £1,600 per week in low season (summer) to £2,750 in high season (winter); includes hotel accommodation, return scheduled flights to Anguilla and 40-minute connecting flight to Anguilla.

■ British Airways (0345 222211) return flights to Anguilla start at £861.

■ BWIA (0171-745 1100) flights cost from £240.

■ Connecting flights to Anguilla with Caribbean Aviation (009 462 3147) cost £73 each way.

■ Ferries run to Anguilla from St Martin every half an hour from 7.30am and cost about £6.50.

■ Room rates at the Malliouhana (009 497 6111), Cove Castles (009 497 6801) or the Cap Juluca (009 497 6606) start at £330. A five-bedroom villa with private pool costs £2,640. All meals are extra.

■ Other operators which go to Anguilla: Elegant resorts (01244 897999); Harlequin Holidays (01703 852780); Thomas Cook Holidays (01733 532258); CV Travel's Different World of Hotels (0171-581 0851).

■ Recommended reading: the *Cadogan Guide to the Caribbean* (£17.99).

■ More information: Anguilla Tourist Board (0171-937 7229); Anguilla National Trust, PO Box 1254, The Valley, Anguilla.

Shoal Bay to Smitty's beach café in the north-east village of Island Harbour, where the short boat ride to Scilly Cay is worth it just for the lobster.

By night there is an array of superb restaurants to choose from. Particularly recommended, working from south-west to north-east, are Mango's and Blanchard's on Mead's Bay, the Riviera at Sandy Ground, and Hibernalia in Island Harbour. At the historic Koal Keel, in the centre of the island, mine host serving delicious Euro-Caribe cuisine is Allan Gumbs, chairman of the island's tourist board, a genial raconteur who knows Anguilla better than most. In the unlikely event of homesickness, Roy's Place on Crocus Bay serves unashamed roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, with British beer, at Sunday lunchtime.

Malouihana is the Caribbean reflecting the island's snaking silhouette, and hijacked into its current Spanish by Columbus in 1493. The charms of Anguilla are diverse enough to merit a few days' exploration in a rented jeep, taking in colourful local bars from Johnno's at Sandy Ground via Uncle Ernie's at

station, is my prime candidate for one of the best hotels in the West Indies: the Malouihana, the ultimate destination for those in search of the finest life has to offer in self-indulgence.

It is 15 years since Leon Roydon, a construction tycoon, stood above Mead's Bay and decided it might make a fine site for a home, possibly even a hotel. After just ten years in business, Leon and his son Nigel have set standards to which all other Caribbean resorts now aspire. The Malouihana is a haven of tranquillity and unashamed luxury, with superb French cuisine and a wine cellar of 20,000 bottles.

If I tell you that each consignment of French wine is delivered by container ship to the bay beneath the hotel, you'll begin to grasp the care the Roydons take.

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Malouihana is the Caribbean reflecting the island's snaking silhouette, and hijacked into its current Spanish by Columbus in 1493. The charms of Anguilla are diverse enough to merit a few days' exploration in a rented jeep, taking in colourful local bars from Johnno's at Sandy Ground via Uncle Ernie's at

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## TRAVEL

19 55

Austria: The delights of Salzburg's advent market and a train trip to the palaces and pomp of Vienna

# Shopping with Mozart and a Viennese whirl

Only glimpses of Salzburg remain: bell-towers, bridges, piazzas, fountains, a dome or two and an impression of cloisters which might all have been flown here by djinns and reassembled as an Italian renaissance city the wrong side of the Alps."

This was Patrick Leigh Fermor's impression as he passed through Austria in 1934 on his epic walk up the Rhine and down the Danube towards Constantinople, and it mirrors my own more than 60 years later on an equally brief visit to this gem of a city. Leigh Fermor turned his back on the peaks of the Tyrol because the swarms of happy skiers made him feel "lonely and out of things."

My daughter and I could not linger either, partly out of fear of freezing to the spot on an icy December weekend, but mainly because we were greedily cramming Salzburg and Vienna into one short break.

There was time enough, though, to do the Salzburg essentials, beginning of course, on a Christmas visit, with the Christkindlmarkt in the cathedral square. Advent markets are a Christmas tradition all over Germany and Austria, but here are no makeshift stalls with flapping plastic awnings and cheap, tawdry goods. In these temples to high taste with prices to match, the stalls form miniature villages of wooden alpine chalets, exquisitely decorated with natural foliage and sparkling with tiny white lights.

Here Slade do not belt out their raucous Christmas pop hit over a crackling tannoy; instead, a sweet-voiced choir on the cathedral steps chimes out *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht*, written by a priestly son of Salzburg 170 years ago, and as its last notes fade the Salzburg church bells take up the chime, until it rebounds endlessly from the walls of the Hohensalzburg fortress that dominates the skyline.

And what is for sale? Mountains and mountains of Christmas decorations in all possible shapes and colours, all exquisitely hand-crafted, once by alpine farming communities in the long, isolated winters, now perhaps with rather less romantic origins.

Fragile glass ornaments, hand-painted with village scenes; pottery bells and baubles and candle-holders; advent wreaths and garlands;



and on the stalls with the biggest crowds around them, carved Nativity sets.

And there is food and drink to keep spirits high and noses from dropping off in the crisp night air, steaming mugs of glühwein or hot punch, stalls offering baked potatoes and apples, bratwurst of every size, with or without mustard and sauerkraut, doughnuts and roasted chestnuts. And not a plastic cup or discarded carton in sight, Salzburg is chic.

By day we explored the smart shops on the Getreidegasse and the arcaded courtyards which surround it, intent on a loden jacket until

understand why Alpine horn music has not reached a wider audience. And on Sunday morning there was still time to join the congregation filling the glorious 17th-century cathedral for Mozart's *Kronungsmesse*, which he wrote for this church, and which we heard at a level of musicianship that a London audience would pay dearly to hear.

A three-and-a-half-hour train ride brought us from Salzburg into Vienna, where similar pleasures awaited, but on a grander scale. This is a city of broad boulevards and imposing architecture, of parks and palaces and pomp, a tribute to grandiose 19th-century urban planning with its tree-lined Ringstrasse encircling the Inner City.

We duly paid homage at Mozart's birthplace, and on a clear, frosty Saturday night took the cable car up to the 11th-century fortress to hear a fine chamber concert of his music, plus an unforgettable finale provided by the Aliner Alphornquartett — four strapping chaps in lederhosen with 12-foot Alpine horns. I can

see the second-mortgage price tags. We peeked into the marble hall of the baroque Mirabell palace, now used for weddings and concerts, and jumped up and down the steps in the Mirabell gardens which echoed to Julie Andrews in *The Sound of Music*.

We duly paid homage at

the might of the Habsburg empire beckoned, so we took the metro to the Archduchess Maria Thérèse's stunning summer palace at Schönbrunn, and then returned to the hub of the dynasty, the vast Hofburg palace, home of the Spanish Riding School and the Vienna Boys' Choir. It was all too much, and we had to repair to the steaming, velvety embrace of a coffee-house for a *Mélange und Sackertorte* (trotty coffee and divine chocolate cake) to recover.

**T**he mother of all advent markets is here, the Wiener Christkindlmarkt in the grounds of the fairytale palace that is Vienna's Rathaus, or city hall. Here a city of miniature chalets dispenses more exquisite crafts, more glühwein, more fun. Upstairs in the Rathaus's magnificent festival hall, a succession of choirs from around the world took the stage to proclaim the triumph of the skies; downstairs children made, baked and painted their own crafts in supervised workshops; outside in the sparkling air, lights twinkled and shoppers jostled and glühwein steamed in mugs and I paid far too much for a tiny, fragile, hand-painted tinkling glass bell that takes pride of place on my tree.

Vienna plus Salzburg just before Christmas does not equal a perfect world. But it comes close, and if you can barely recall the taste of pure, undiluted Christmas spirit, this will bring it flooding back.

SALLY BAKER  
© The author was a guest of Crystal Cities.



Salzburg's Christkindlmarkt: high taste and high prices

## FACT FILE

■ Crystal Cities is at Crystal House, The Courtyard, Arlington Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6BW (0181-390 9900). Breaks in Vienna start at £269 and in Salzburg from £325. A tailor-made trip costs £509 per person, including return flights, first-class rail travel between Salzburg and Vienna and B&B rooms in five-star hotels.

■ Austrian Airlines (0171-434 7350) offers return flights from Heathrow to Salzburg from £192 and to Vienna from £198. British Airways (0345 2221111) flights to Vienna start at £189. Lauda Air (0171-630 5924) fares to Salzburg start at £199 and to Vienna £169.

■ Reading: The Lonely Planet City Guide to Vienna (£5.95) has good maps plus a selection of restaurants and hotels.

■ Vienna has a wide choice of eateries both traditional and fast-food. There are several archetypal coffee houses in the streets off the Michaelerplatz in front of the main Hofburg entrance. In Salzburg, the St Peter Stiftskeller (0662 8412680) in St Peter Bezirk is an attractive inn in a courtyard near the cathedral.

■ The Austrian National Tourist Office is at 30, St George Street, London W14 OAL (0171-629 0461). Telephone or postal queries only. Salzburg City Tourist Office, Auerspergstrasse 7 (8987 304).



Advent market stalls at Vienna's Rathaus form a miniature village of Alpine chalets

From November 4th Britannia Airways will

fly direct from London Gatwick

into Cape Town and Johannesburg.

## Holidays in South Africa with Britannia from £499.\* (That should put a smile on your face).

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0171 630 0050 or see your local travel agent.

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## A Nile Cruise - Special Offer

On board the SS Karim, the original paddle steamer of the Kings of Egypt  
7 nights from £540.00

For 1996 we shall be offering just 15 cabins each week on board the SS Karim, the recently restored Royal Paddle steamer of King Farouk and Fuad of Egypt. Since there can be no better way of escaping the uncertain British winter than to glide down the Nile in the company of just 25 passengers and in the comfort of SS Karim these few places will be taken up, so telephone reservations are essential.

The SS Karim was built in Britain for the then Sultan of Egypt Fuad who was titled King Farouk I after 1922. Upon his death in 1965 the vessel was inherited by King Farouk who remained its owner until the revolution of 1952 and the formation of modern Egypt and until recently remained the presi-

### DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES

per person in a twin cabin Monday

1996

October 7 - £540

November 11, 18, 25 - £595

December 2, 9, 16 - £625

January 3, 10, 17, 24 - £695

February 3, 10, 17, 24 - £695

March 3, 10, 17 - £695

March 24 - £770

March 31 - £695

April 7, 14, 21, 28 - £695

### SUPPLEMENTS

per person

Single cabin - £225

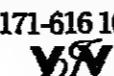
Double cabin (with balcony) - £150

Upper decks - £125

Abu Simbel (by road) - £75

Prices include return air travel, transfers, seven nights on board the SS Karim, full board, excursion programme, services of a local guide, port taxes, VAT, travel insurance, average airport taxes (visa can be obtained by the Company, Brixton). All prices are in £ sterling. All prices are accepted subject to our Conditions of Booking, a copy of which is available on request.

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## THE GALAPAGOS

A 7 NIGHT CRUISE OF THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS WITH A VISIT TO ECUADOR

### THE AMBASSADOR I

The ideal way to explore the Galapagos is by sea and our 7 night exploration cruise aboard the 'Ambassador I' offers a comprehensive itinerary and a comfortable air-conditioned base. Although she has a capacity for 130 passengers, the maximum is limited to just 86 passengers in the interests of the islands' wildlife. This makes for relaxed and roomy atmosphere on board where you will find all the amenities you

would expect from a larger vessel, swimming pool, shop, large lounge, bar and a single sitting dining room. All cabins have private shower and toilet and there is a choice of both outside and inside cabins.

Whilst the Ambassador I cannot be described as a deluxe vessel she offers a good level of comfort, hearty food, and a relaxed atmosphere, and the local onboard naturalists contribute enormously to your understanding of this world in microcosm.

1996/1997 PRICES PER PERSON

IN TWO BERTH OR

TWIN BEDDED CABIN

Florena/España deck Inside 2 berth £1995

Florena/Isabela deck Inside 2 beds £2195

Florena deck Outside 2 berth £2295

Florena deck Outside 2 beds £2449

Isabela deck Outside 2 beds £2595

Florena deck Deluxe 2 beds £2749

España deck Single Inside £2495

Florena deck Single Outside £2749

\*Peak season air supplement £89 per person

Prices subject to surcharge. Ports subject to change.

Prices include Scheduled flights London-Quito-Baltra-Quito-London, 7 nights aboard the Ambassador I on full board, shore excursions, park taxes, 2 nights accommodation in Quito with breakfast, transfers, city sightseeing tour, UK departure tax, naturalists.

Not included: Travel insurance, airport tax, tips to ship's crew.

### FOR FURTHER DETAILS

Please telephone 0171-409 0376

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## JILL CRAWSHAW'S TRAVEL TIPS

# Plan now for the Christmas getaway

More people than ever are going away at the end of the year, so if you prefer adventure, cruising or culture to turkey and television, take your pick from this selection of places. But decide soon while there are still vacancies

## Rockie train

CROSSING the frozen prairies and the Rocky Mountains on one of the world's great trains, *The Canadian*, is a spectacular way to spend Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Great Rail Journeys (01904 679969) offers a 12-day escorted trip, departing December 21, which includes a three-night, 2,790-mile rail journey, three nights in Toronto at the start of the tour, a trip to the Festival of Lights at Niagara Falls and, at the end of the journey, two nights in Vancouver and another two in Victoria — with New Year celebrated at 35,000ft flying back across Canada, arriving at Heathrow at 10.30am. The cost of the holiday is £1,390, which covers flights, private sleepers, all meals and Christmas lunch on the train and B&B elsewhere.

## By mule

THE OLDEST Christian churches in Africa were cut out of solid granite at Lalibela, Ethiopia, in the 12th-century and are a monument to the strength of the early faith. Explore Worldwide (01252 319448) offers a 17-day escorted tour departing on December 20 and spending Christmas Day among the churches, which are reached by mule. Among other highlights offered are the sacred city of Axum, medieval castles in the Rift Valley and game safaris in the Apenines (four to seven hours daily) from Todi to Monasteries. Montefalco and Spello, visiting Romanesque and Renaissance churches and frescos en route, and crossing the high pastures of Monte Subasio. The price of £995, plus £280 for air fares, includes full board (hot picnics on the walks), mainly staying in 4-star hotels, with champagne and Christmas cake on the 25th.

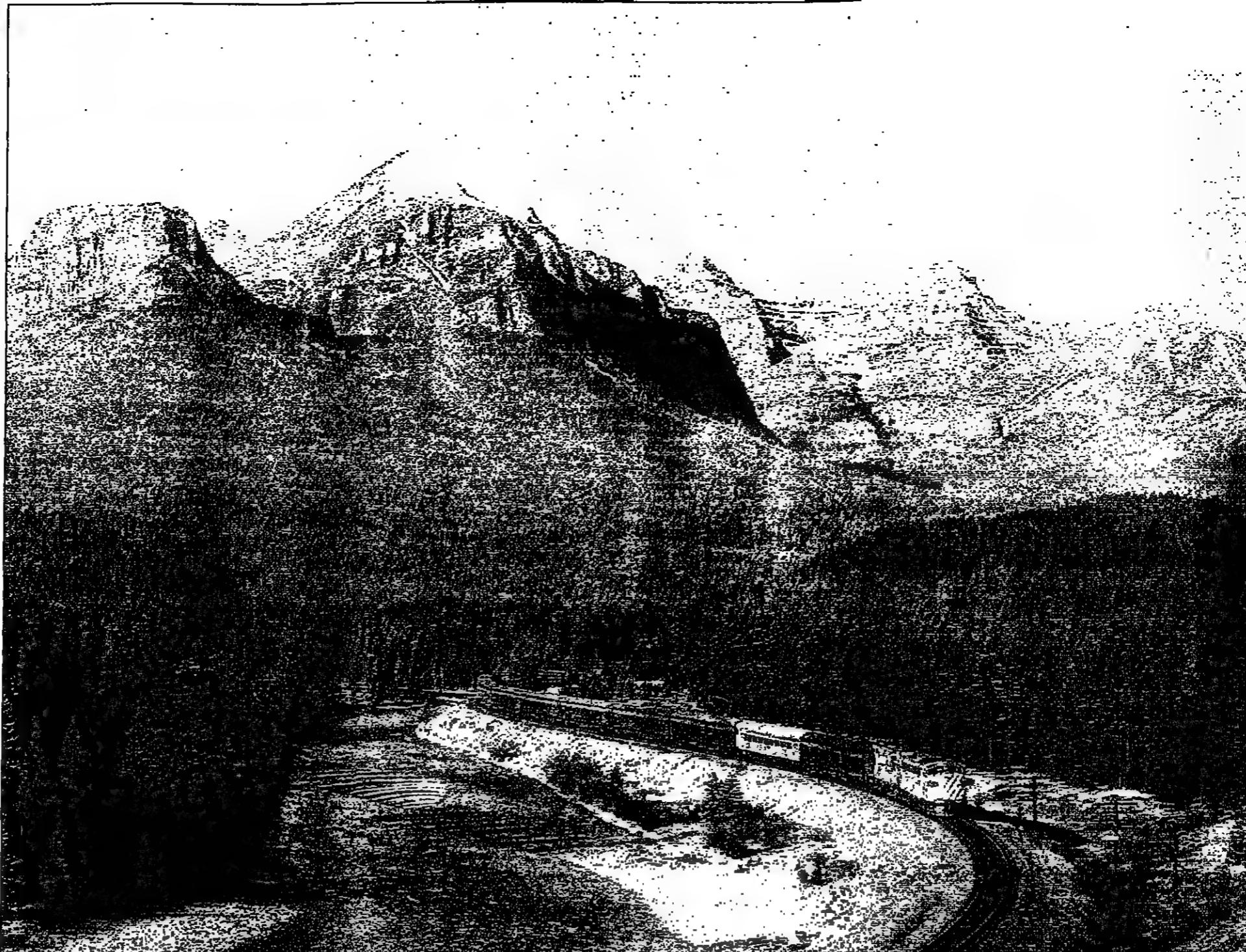
## Green theme

YOU CAN walk down Italy's Umbrian hills to Assisi on Christmas Eve, spending Christmas Day in the medieval city, on an eight-day break with Alternative Travel (01865 513333). Four days are spent walking in the Apenines (four to seven hours daily) from Todi to Monasteries. Montefalco and Spello, visiting Romanesque and Renaissance churches and frescos en route, and crossing the high pastures of Monte Subasio. The price of £995, plus £280 for air fares, includes full board (hot picnics on the walks), mainly staying in 4-star hotels, with champagne and Christmas cake on the 25th.

## Spy cruise

ACTORS Dame Judi Dench and Michael Williams give Christmas readings,

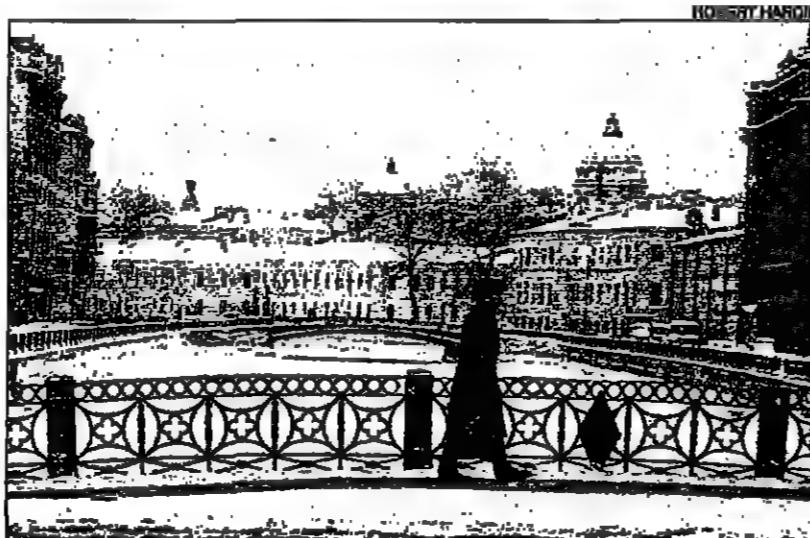
with Steppes East (01285 810267). The Tsar's Ball held in one of the palaces is an extravaganza that includes a five-course dinner of French foods, wines and champagne, with the Kirov Ballet and orchestra performing between courses. The break from December 29 to January 2, costs £740 for flights, B&B and sightseeing. The ball costs a further £240.



Rockies spectacular: one of the world's best known trains, *The Canadian*, travelling through the Bow river valley in Alberta. This Christmas it will be carrying getaway revellers

## Pole vault

A WEEK'S "Christmas in Warsaw and Krakow" tour from Page & Moy (0116 2507676) costing £595 half board, includes sightseeing tours of the Polish cities, a trip to Zakopane ski resort and a performance at the Warsaw Opera House. On Christmas Day there's a visit to Vodovice, birthplace of Pope John Paul II. On Boxing Day, it's off to the salt mines at Wieliczka, now transformed into underground galleries housing salt sculptures. Canada, Austria, Russia, Norway and Scotland



You can dance in New Year's Eve at St Petersburg (above) or visit ancient churches around Assisi in the Umbrian hills



which the company is able to arrange for about £50 per person.

## Kenya climb

IF YOU fancy scaling Kilimanjaro in Kenya this Christmas, Sherpa Expeditions (0181-577 2717) has a 16-night, fully-escorted journey which starts and finishes in Nairobi, and also takes in Mount Kenya. The cost is £1,995 per person (based on two sharing), which includes return flights from Heathrow and hotel accommodation with breakfast in Nairobi. While trekking you sleep in mountain huts and tents, but full portage is provided so only day-packs need to be carried.

## Cold comfort

A VIKING-style New Year is promised by Arctic Experience (01737 218800) on its five-night Icelandic breaks, which include a New Year's Eve dinner, midnight fireworks, a sightseeing tour of the capital, Reykjavik, and an excursion to the waterfalls, hot springs and bubbling mud pools. There's also a visit to a natural hangover cure — a sauna followed by a plunge into a freezing lake. The cost of the breaks, departing on December 28, is from £609.

## French feast

GASTRONOMIC Revellon festivities are offered by VFB (01242 240 330) in many French regions from £155 to £245 per person. For example, a two-night package to Alsace, including ferry crossing for passengers and car, accommodation at an auberge in the heart of the Vosges forest and a New Year's Eve dinner and dance, costs £176.

## SAY "I DO" TO A P&O ANNIVERSARY CRUISE.

If you have a special anniversary coming up in 1997, why not turn it into a romantic second honeymoon with a P&O Anniversary Cruise?

Flowers in your cabin, a special Captain's champagne reception and your portrait photograph in its own silver-plated frame will help you celebrate in style.

We even give you an extra £50 to treat yourself on board while you sail from one exotic location to another.

There are five Anniversary Cruises in all, with Victoria launching the season on 14th March with a fly-cruise to the Caribbean.

The season continues with a 14-night cruise on our newest superliner, Oriana. Sail with her around the

Mediterranean delights of Malta, Tunisia, Italy and Spain. Or you may prefer to sample the Mediterranean aboard Britain's favourite cruise ship, Canberra.

And let's not forget Victoria's Anniversary Cruise on 8th May as she spends 14 nights exploring Amsterdam and the Baltic treasures of St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Helsinki, Gdynia and Copenhagen.

With prices starting from as little as £1045 for 13 nights, there's no better way to commemorate that special occasion.

For further details see your local ABTA travel agent or telephone our 24 hour brochure line, quoting the reference number DAD.

\*Eligible anniversaries include 10, 15, 20, 25th etc. Anniversary dates need not coincide with cruise dates.

**P&O Cruises**  
0990 726 726

## Sightseeing

TOURS of several European cities are offered by Martin Randall (0181-742 3355), giving holiday-makers a chance to attend Midnight Mass or older church services, as well as tours accompanied by art, archaeological or historical experts. A seven-day break to Prague costs £1,240; to Rome £990; Florence, £980. A tour of Flanders, including visits to Bruges, Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Malines and Louvain, costs £925. Prices include flights, some meals, admission charges and 4-star hotel accommodation.

## Have a ball

YOU CAN waltz your way into 1997 at a St Petersburg New Year's Eve Ball during a four-night break to the city.

## Do Disney

FESTIVE lights, decorations,

floats and fantasy galore are promised by Leger Holidays (01709 839839) on its four-night break by coach to Disneyland

with Steppes East (01285 810267).

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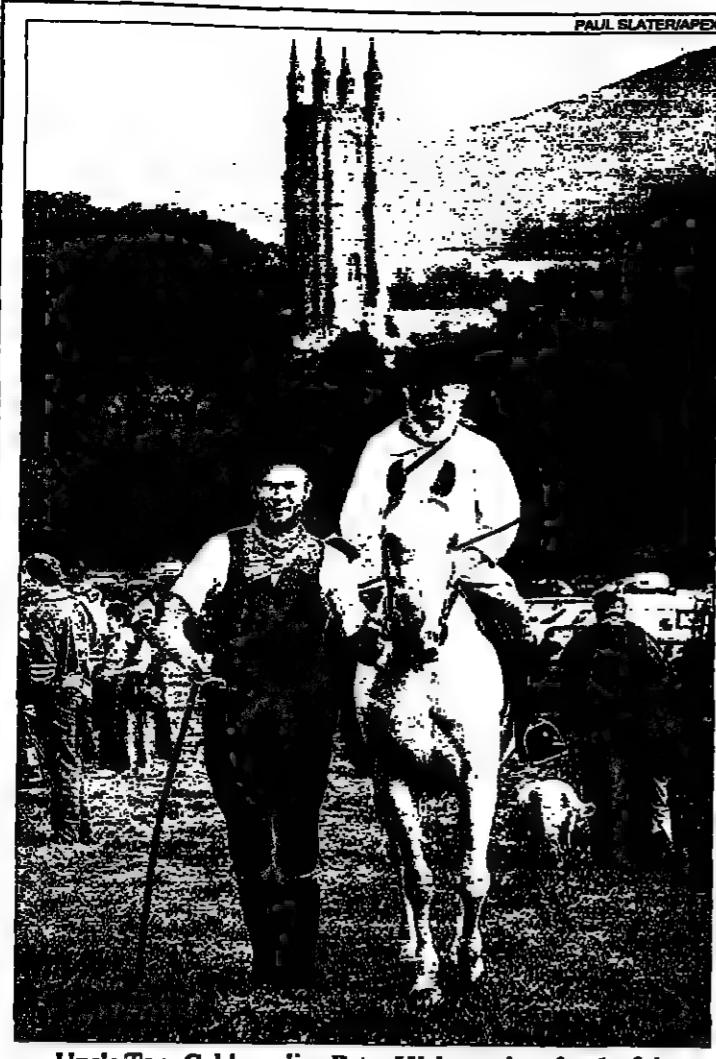
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**Britain: The lasting appeal of Widecombe Fair; how a privatised railway company looks after families**



Uncle Tom Cobley, alias Peter Hicks, arrives for the fair

PAUL SLATER/PA

## Where rhyme and reason prevail

**T**he folklorist Sabine Baring-Gould published an infectious ditty in 1880 with a killing tune and a complex refrain that neither rhymes nor scans. The song tells of seven over-optimistic yokels and an ill-fated day out on the back of a borrowed horse. The comical tale rapidly became standard fare in the drawing rooms of Victorian England. The farming community of Widecombe in the Moor has been making hay ever since.

Throughout the year, an estimated one million visitors from all over the world wend their way to the village on the eastern edge of Dartmoor, in search of "... Uncle Tom Cobley and all".

Eight verses and a chorus have ensured that Widecombe remains the most popular tourist venue in the 365 square miles of National Park. On the second Tuesday of every September, up to 10,000 people flock to the Widecombe Fair of the song.

Tom Cobley lives on, both in spirit and guise. There was no mistaking the Devon burr, the top hat, smock, hombail boots and clippety-clopping grey mare. Farmer Peter Hicks came to Widecombe with his parents, as a boy of 15, in 1948. Now, aged 64, he has convincingly assumed the role of Uncle Tom at Widecombe Fair for the past ten years. He confided: "Originally I had a false beard, but it was horrible to wear, so for the last four

### WIDEcombe FAIR

*Tom Pearce, Tom Pearce, lend me your grey mare,  
All along, down along, out along lee.  
For I want to go to Widecombe Fair,  
Wi' Bill Brewer, Jan Stewer, Peter Gurney,  
Peter Day, Dan'l Whiddon, Harry Hawk,  
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all  
Old Uncle Tom Cobley and all*

years, I've grown my own and then had it shaved off for charity." There appears to have been a real Tom Cobley who lived 20 miles away in the village of Spreyton and died in 1790, long before Widecombe Fair existed. But the musical tale of seven men out on an ill-fated spree could well have been Widecombe's joke at the expense of Spreyton people. Several variations of the song were doing the rounds of the West Country in the 19th century. It is possible that Widecombe's version just happened to be the one that Baring-Gould collected.

In the chill of an autumn evening, a cheery grey gaggle of septuagenarians was making tracks towards the coach park. In high summer, squadrons of tour buses land here from eight in the morning onwards. Beneath the yew tree in the church square, Uncle Tom Cobley eyed the Old Forge, now a complex of shops, and reflected on what used to be. "Years ago, I'd have my horse shod there," he said. "The place next door had petrol pumps outside. You could buy anything, from a bootlace to a kettle... and Sexton's Cottage had a sexton living in it."

**S**exton Cottage is now a National Trust shop. In other former cottages, Tom Cobley and his hapless fellows ride in endless circles around the sides of commemorative mugs. Grey mares plod linen landscapes. Figurines stand snub-nosed, ruddy-faced and ready. Bill Brewers and Jan Stewers, rural stereotypes to man.

The 14th-century Old Inn serves venison and Widecombe Wallop on draught. The smaller, folksier Rugglesstone Inn does deep dish pies and a free pint for Uncle Tom Cobley on Fair Day. The Wayside

Bonehill, Bell, Chinkwell and Honeybag Tors. Glowering above it all is Hamel Beacon, more than 500 metres above sea level. As if in celebration of its surroundings, the church tower soars 135 feet high above a patchwork of Saxon hill farms. This would have been the first and last view of Widecombe that Cobley and his six friends would have had. It was here that Tom Pearce "seed his old mare down a-making her will".

In the village, shops were closing. From one of any number of smallholdings, a lone calf bawled to the skies, to be answered by another in a neighbouring hamlet. In the stiffening breeze, the church tower appeared to sway against the swirling cloud. With the last coach party long gone, heifers and ponies appeared from nowhere to graze beneath the horse chestnuts on Widecombe Green.

Around the corner, Widecombe children played ball. Last year, the village school received a new library from the profits of the Fair that takes place, conveniently, in the six-acre field opposite.

Come the millennium, Widecombe Fair, with its show horses, terrier racing and tug-of-war, will be celebrating its 150th anniversary. A village store and post office opens every morning, as it always has done. Widecombe sells most things, but not its soul.

BRIAN PEDLEY

ADRIAN SHERATT

## Great training for children

**I**f you go down to the train today, you'd better go in disguise — as a parent of small children or, preferably, a small child yourself. Great Western Trains has introduced the Family Carriage, a compartment added to its InterCity trains at the weekend to do what it says, basically — get families together and stick them in one place, leaving the rest of the train free to travel in peace.

You can tell the Family Carriage by the yellow sticker in each of the windows. Those unblissed by children should watch out for it, or they may suffer the fate of the grown-up passengers on the day we caught the train at Paddington. One man, pleased at finding a choice position, on his own and with a proper table to put his things on, visibly aged when the compartment began filling up with pleasure-bent juveniles. We

were going to Plymouth for a long weekend. We'd never been there, and three hours on the rails seemed the outer limit of the children's capacity to be quiet. We were wrong, of course, but it seemed a good idea at the time.

Our eight-year-old, Eve, was looking forward to the free activity pack promised as part of the FC Experience. Our 19-month-old, Grace ... well, we had no idea what she was looking forward to. Babies are like that: enigmatic.

Our seats were reserved for free, which was handy. The children got the window seats. Grace stood up and looked out. The train started up. By the time it reached the end of the platform Grace had grown bored with looking out of the window. Three hours started to seem like a very long time.

We got the activity' packs from the buffet car, and Eve got on with the puzzles while

Grace threw the complimentary playing cards around the compartment. A pile of rubbish was growing on the table, with nowhere to put it. Helpful tip for Great Western: put rubbish bins in the Family Carriage (they have, after all, got them in the largely deserted first-class compartments).

And another helpful tip: put the Family Carriage at the end of the train, rather than in the middle. Having it bang up against the buffet car meant everyone who wanted to get to the car had to manoeuvre their way past Grace.

But on the whole the idea is a good one. You can reserve your seats for nothing, and when you're on board the pecking order reads: children first, the rest nowhere, a significant advance in a world in which most people seem either to be childless, or forget what it was like to be one.

By the same token, a hotel

where children are treated as anything other than devils should be given an extra star, or perhaps a red badge of courage. Ours in Plymouth, overlooking the spectacular Hoe, had a children's play area stocked with toys that didn't look as though they had been picked up at a car boot sale, an indoor swimming pool, and outdoor activity centre, and the sort of dining room staff that made you feel they really didn't mind when a baby threw a tantrum because she was tired and her dad had had to take her, and her dinner, back up to the room.

Presumably the same applied to the cleaning staff when they discovered the soft fruits decorating the carpet and the several dozen bath towels required to dry two small bodies, but possibly not.

And so to Plymouth and the chance to use Great Western's discount vouchers, giving money off or two-for-one entrance to rainy-day attractions all over the Great Western stamping ground, including London. We could have gone

CHRIS CAMPING

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The Monastery of St. Catherine's has attracted pilgrims since AD 327 when the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine, ordered the building of a sanctuary around the site of the Burning Bush. Its setting at the foot of Mount Sinai adds to the solitude and mystery of the site. Sinai adds to the solitude and mystery of the site.

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## TRAVEL

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TRUST

Madeira: From lush, subtropical scenery to volcanic mountains and a fine wine

## The island with a twilight glow

I emerged from the church at Moniz, where I had been gazing at the tomb of Karl I, the last Habsburg emperor, who lived in Madeira in exile until his untimely death in 1922. A hawk urged me to buy a pack of embroidered handkerchiefs, a local speciality. I declined. He insisted. I declined. Then he swore at me, in a colourful manner but not menacingly. Eventually I decoded the abuse: it was his mispronounced version of 'Four quid'.

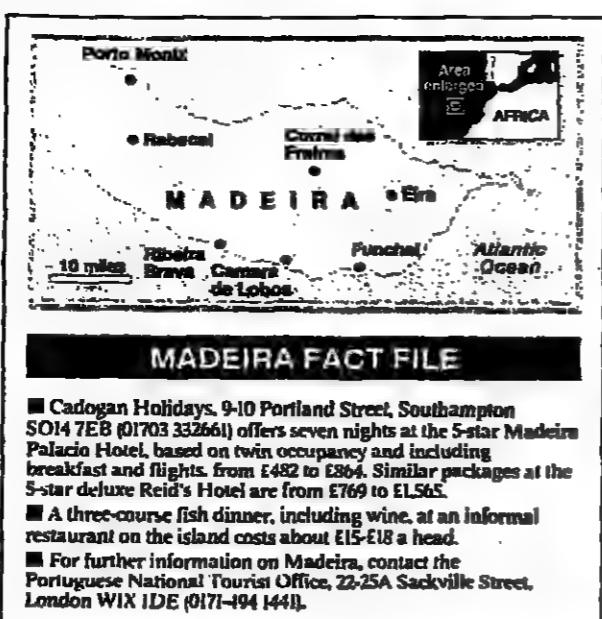
You expect the occasional bit of foul language as you wander around Europe. But not in Madeira, the most decorous resort imaginable. It's not exactly packed with the young and the loud. Indeed, a press release proudly announces that the average age of the visitor has plummeted from 54 to 51. I suspect these figures are doctored by taking into account the occasional baby and globetrotting grandchild. The true statistics are probably down from 91 to 87.

Madeira's reputation as a resort for the twilight generation shouldn't put you off. The wonderful thing about old folk is that they don't move fast. A party of six, with men sporting white moustaches and cravats, moved so slowly at Gatwick that they didn't make it to the gate on time and our plane, by then taxied to the runway, had to turn back to pick them up. (I am not making this up.)

On Madeira, the oldies tend to stay put, sipping tea at Reid's hotel or contemplating the Atlantic from their hotel balconies, leaving the rest of the island free for the under-eighties minority to explore. Even on the coolest days they are by the pool, half-dressed, soaking up the cloud-rays.

Madeira may sound deadly, but it's not. It is that rarest of holiday places: a resort that has kept its dignity. There are one or two pubs, but of the smarter kind, and a few tourist-trap restaurants near the marina in the capital, Funchal, but you won't find fish and chip shops or signs proclaiming "Wir sprechen Deutsch", though shopkeepers probably do.

What makes the island enthralling is its unlikely variety. The even climate means that those content to doze by the pool can do so undisturbed, but visitors with a tad more



adventurousness will find plenty to explore. Wander inland from Funchal or Ribeira Brava and you immediately enter a fabulous subtropical landscape of steeply terraced volcanic mountains, strewn with seemingly inaccessible vineyards and vegetable plots.

From here the roads wind up into the mountains, offering even more spectacular views. To the west there is a plateau, and then the landscape changes again, this time to an approximation of Scottish moorland. At Ribeira Brava, you can walk through woods reminiscent of a Mediterranean pine forest to the Risco waterfall. Madeira, indeed, is walker's paradise with thousands of kilometres of well-maintained paths that follow the levadas, irrigation channels created by the Moors many centuries ago.

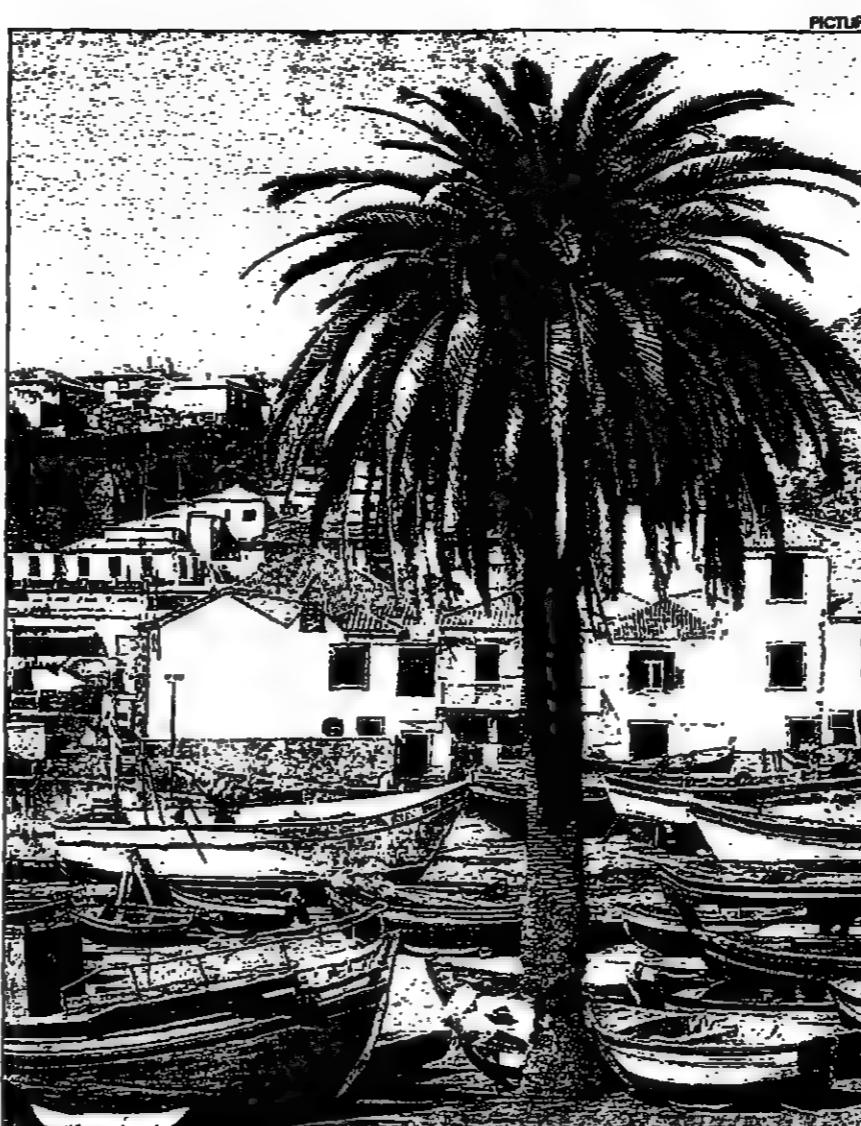
The north coast is more desolate than the intensely cultivated south shore. Here cliffs plunge down to the ocean and the roads hug the rock so closely that they sometimes pass beneath waterfalls, giving cars a dousing. At Funchal, you can eat copiously and cheaply on restaurant terraces

overlooking a shoreline of jagged black volcanic rocks against which Atlantic breakers pound.

Not that the south lacks drama. Near Camara de Lobos looms the second largest cliff in Europe, Cabo Girao. And at Eira, just north of Funchal, is a hillside viewing platform 1,100 metres up and looking down on to the vine-terraced village of Curral das Freiras, set in a bowl surrounded by vertiginous mountains.

Funchal suffers from urban sprawl but the old centre, largely pedestrianised, retains buildings that reflect Portuguese imperial grandeur, monumentalised in the island's dark, volcanic stone. The cathedral, mostly dull, has a superb wooden roof, but the Jesuit church is packed with azulejos, the ornamental tiles found wherever the Portuguese flag flies.

Near the town are old mansions, such as the Quinta da Cruzes, now a museum set among lush subtropical gardens. Even outside the confines of gardens, along any mountain road,



Madeira has managed to retain its dignity — no fish and chip shops here

the borders are ablaze with azaleas, lily, orchid, and nasturtium.

In the centre of Funchal is the São Francisco wine lodge, the headquarters of the Madeira Wine Company. The fortified wine has been produced here for centuries, and the organised tours include tastings. There are four styles of madeira, which from driest to sweetest are called Sercial, Verdelho, Bual, and Malmsey, each named after a different grape variety. The rule with madeira is the older the better. Five-year-old wines are good, and ten and 15-year-olds can be superb, but younger wines are made from the Tinta Negra Mole grape, which usually lacks distinction. With madeira, you get what you pay for. A glass of 1882 Verdelho will set you back about £22. Madeira is no

gastronomic paradise, but there is abundant fresh fish. The speciality is espada, scabbard fish, usually served with fried bananas. Better still are grouper and sea bream, cooked simply with butter, herbs and garlic. The freshest fish I encountered was at the tiny O Jango restaurant in east Funchal, where, as at any good fish restaurant, you can select your own creature before the cook gets to work.

If you want lager and discos,

Madeira is probably not for you.

But for an equable climate, relaxation, good walks, inspiring landscape, tennis, and indolence it's a hard place to match.

STEPHEN BROOK

• The author was a guest of Cadogan Holidays

## An artist you can bank on

The Place de Furstenberg, off Boulevard St Germain, is beautiful, with cobbles and broadleafed trees, but just off the square is Eugène Delacroix's old workshop and apartment, one of the most charming and smallest museums in Paris.

Delacroix is immediately recognisable as the man on the back of the F100 note, and as one of France's finest 19th-century painters. His major works, including *The 28th of July, Algerian Women*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *Don Juan*, *Jewish Musicians* and *The Death of Sardanapale* are in the Louvre. The little Musée Delacroix is more about the atmosphere of a Left Bank studio than about his grandest works — there are a few oil portraits, but mostly sketches and studies are on show. The artist moved to Rue Furstenberg in 1857 towards the end of his life, when he found himself exhausted

by the walk from his old apartment to the church of Saint-Sulpice, where he was painting one of the chapels.

His rooms were not large but there was a walled garden where he decided to build a studio. By

this time he was well established and not short of cash, so the result is more a classical temple than a garden shed.

Like many people, Delacroix had trouble with his builders, and waited eight months before his studio was ready. "Half the workmen aren't reliable," he moaned, "and the other half are lazy or too expensive... this has caused great annoyance."

The eventual result was a cream-

stone building with a frieze over the front door and enormous windows and skylights.

Delacroix came to find his apartment delightful, with its view at the front over a cobbled courtyard and the flowerboxes of his neighbours.



PARIS

and behind over his garden, which is still a place where visitors can sit and escape the bustle of the boulevards.

He lived with his long-time housekeeper, Jenny Le Guillou, and there are two portraits of her — one as a young girl with an unfortunate snub nose, and later as a mature woman, grave in a bonnet.

In the hall, there is an enormous bust of Delacroix, with pointy moustache and demi-beard. A foppish scarf falls from his neck. His paintings and sketches are displayed in what was once his bedroom, library and salon. A few pieces of his furniture are dotted about, but the most interesting is his metal-lined mahogany painting table in the studio. In glass cases there are his original palettes, still thick with carefully ranged paint.

There are also letters to friends, such as the writer George Sand and Baudelaire, who

wrote a poem in honour of the painter, perhaps referring to his gloomy backgrounds: "Delacroix, lake of blood/Haunted by wicked angels/Shaded by a wood of evergreen pines."

The Delacroix museum is a pleasant stop on a wander around St-Germain, where he lived until his death at home in 1863. From here it is a five-minute walk to Saint-Sulpice, past the Marché St-Germain. In the church, he worked on the Saints-Anges chapel for more than a decade, and there are two more paintings.

The Delacroix Left Bank

tour can be completed with a coffee in the Café de la Mairie, opposite Saint-Sulpice, where, no doubt, Delacroix occasionally took lunch.

KATE MUIR

• Musée Delacroix, 6 Rue Furstenberg, 75014 Paris, open daily 10am-8pm, except Tues. Fris.

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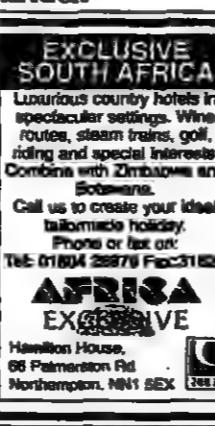
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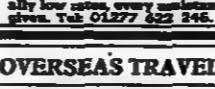
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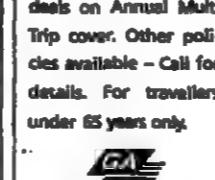
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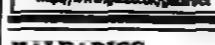
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Helen Pridham says it is vital to see what your policy covers before you become ill

## Check the small print while you can

The growing number of private medical insurance policies on the market is making the task of choosing the right one even more difficult. Not only are more insurers competing for business, but each has several policies. PPP alone offers seven healthcare schemes. In total, there are now well over 100 policies on sale.

By this time next year, the choice will have grown further, with three or four more providers expected to offer medical insurance. Rising competition may be good for consumers in some ways, but it is also increasing confusion.

Penny O'Nions, a medical insurance specialist, says: "There is more and more fudging going on, particularly in the case of middle-range policies. It is becoming increasingly difficult to compare like with like."

Each company uses a different format to present its policies and descriptions of benefits are not always clear. The Office of Fair Trading criticised such complexities this summer. John Bridgeman, its Director, said: "The combination of medical matters and insurance makes these products doubly difficult to understand and almost impossible to compare."

The OFT wants policies presented in a common format. Mrs O'Nions believes that improvements will not come until the sector is regulated. "If nothing is done, people will be encouraged to buy unsuitable policies and another scandal on the lines of the mis-selling of personal pension policies will occur," she says.

What features should consumers be aware of? Almost all policies fully refund the cost of inpatient treatment, including hospital accommodation, fees for theatre, surgeons and other specialists, dressings and drugs. Some lower-cost policies restrict the type or number of hospitals that can be used.

The trend in the NHS and the private sector is to limit the length of inpatient stays and, if possible, avoid them. Increasingly, treatment is taking place as day care or in outpatient clinics.

Medical insurers will pay only for hospital stays recommended by a specialist. It is important to check just how much cover is provided towards outpatient treatment.

Many policies limit these benefits. Some budget plans do not cover outpatient costs at all or only if they are directly associated with inpatient treatment. Many buyers of low-cost or budget plans have not realised the implications of their decision, and this is leading to a growing flood of complaints to insurers.

George Connolly, of Health Care Matters, a Dorset adviser, said: "most people who buy budget plans assume that they are missing out only on unimportant frills."

In a simple case, an initial consultation with a specialist may cost £70 to £80, a couple of straightforward procedures such as a blood test and an X-ray to establish more about your condition would cost another £80, and a follow-up consultation a further £60. However, some tests, such as scans, cost between £300 and £500.

So the total bill could well run into four figures. Although Bupa, recently improved outpatient benefits on its policies, many advisers believe it has not gone far enough. On its popular Bupa Care policy, diagnostics are covered in full, but payments for other outpatient expenses, such as consultations with specialists or physiotherapy, are restricted to between £500 and £800, depending on the scale of cover chosen.

Policyholders with no outpatient cover who cannot afford to pay specialists' fees upfront may still have to wait



Close to home: Penny O'Nions, a medical insurance specialist, and her mother Beryl Bellworthy, 66, who recently suffered a stroke. Mrs Bellworthy has no medical insurance and is now waiting months for follow-up therapies on the NHS. If she had private cover, such a wait would be unnecessary as some or all of the cost of these treatments would be covered. "If I didn't already have insurance cover, my mother's experience would certainly have made me want to take some out" said Mrs O'Nions.

treatment. Getting expert, impartial advice on which policy is best for you is not easy either. Most are sold direct by company salesmen who can tell you only about their own products. Most independent financial advisers have little expertise in this area and deal with a limited range of providers.

Seeking help from a specialist independent adviser is best. Most are happy to deal with you over the phone. If you are switching insurers you need to be particularly careful because you may lose cover for pre-existing conditions.

To choose the right policy, Mrs O'Nions reckons it is often a good idea to have a word with your GP first. Try to find out what is in your notes that may lead to certain conditions being excluded. Ask about the hospitals and specialists he recommends so that you do not go for a policy that restricts his choice.

Consider your age and what benefits you are likely to need from a policy. Compare policies that offer the benefits you want and find the one that offers best value for money. And look at the small print.

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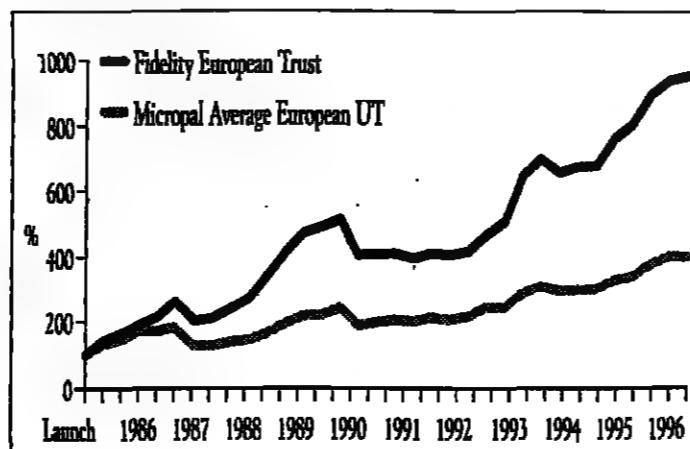
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# Bahhare strengthens classic case

By JULIAN MUSCAT

**BAHARE**, who dominated his opponents on looks, strengthened his position as favourite for next season's 2,000 Guineas with a record-breaking victory in the Laurent-Perrier Champagne Stakes over seven furlongs at Doncaster yesterday.

The son of Woodman stalked a steady pace before taking control approaching the final furlong, quickening away from In Command by 3½ lengths. Once in front, he extended his advantage with every stride as Willie Carson furthered his education by driving him out to the line.

It was an impressive performance in almost every respect. The time, at 1min 23.21sec, lowered the juvenile course record by more than a second with the help of a following wind. "He was impressive," his owner, John Dunlop, said. "He settled well in behind, and quickened nicely. It is always good when a horse comes out and wins a proper race."

Among bookmakers, William Hill gave Bahhare the biggest vote of confidence, quoting him at 5-1. Ladbrokes and Coral offer a point longer.

but there was an element of uncertainty about Bahhare's true mettle, which arose when he was asked to quicken.

Bahhare momentarily wobbled when Carson picked him up. And he threatened to flash his tail — often a sign of temperament — with each stroke of Carson's whip. "I noticed it," Dunlop conceded. "It was the first time in his life he's been hit, and it came as a bit of a surprise. Willie said he is still a bit of a baby."

Given that he also played up before consenting to enter the stalls, the more prudent will wait for further racecourse evidence before rating this unbeaten colt.

That is unlikely to come this term, as Dunlop intimated Bahhare's season has run its course. Interestingly, Bahhare's superiority over In Command was not quite as emphatic as that posted by Revoque at York last month.

Revoque, engaged in yesterday's test, was withdrawn on account of the fast ground, but his worth should be established, against Zamindar at Longchamp tomorrow. There is much to play for on the classic front.

Among bookmakers, William Hill gave Bahhare the biggest vote of confidence, quoting him at 5-1. Ladbrokes and Coral offer a point longer.



Bahhare speeds clear in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster yesterday

## Wall Street is sound investment

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—15: The absence of a confirmed front-runner could reduce this to more of a sprint, which entitles **My Best Valentine** to the vote. He returned to his best at Chester last time. Law Commission, another in top form, has claims for a place. Of the others, Tarawa reserves his best efforts for straight tracks while Resounder weakened on his sole outing over this trip.

245: Wall Street made the running when a respectable fourth in France last time but appears more effective when held up. This faster ground should help him and Farasan, who may oblige with the early pace. Singpiel is the class act but he has flattered to deceive in the past. Prize Giving, a winner first time up this season, cannot be discounted.

315: Oggi, who returned from reported muscular problems to win at Haydock, can follow up. Clan Chief, a model of consistency, has scaled the handicap and now tries this trip for the first time. He has



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

JULIAN MUSCAT CHANNEL 4

prospects, along with Squire Corrie, Kildare Lad and Bee Heart Boy.

445: Nink is on a roll and, provided she is none the worse for her exertions at Epsom on Wednesday when winning by six lengths from Clan Ber, she can land her fourth race inside a month. Angus-G and Clinton Fox filled the places behind her at Sandown a fortnight ago but are drawn wide and reposition on only marginally better terms. Serendipity can be forgiven a poor run at Goodwood and looks a threat judged on earlier form.

446: Clement Freud may not thank me for suggesting that Nagnagnag is the bet of the day and can carry his silks to a well-deserved success. At York, his filly ran an eye-catching race in a competitive handicap to finish fifth behind Concor Un. Racing off the same handicap mark, she can open her account for the season. Beauchamp Jazz is well treated and goes well over a straight mile. April The Eighth would have a chance if he stays the trip.

RICHARD EVANS

## Longchamp offers hints to Arc puzzle

CLUES to the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe should be plentiful on a fascinating programme at Longchamp tomorrow. The Paris track stages the Prix Vermeille (3.05), Prix Niel (3.35) and Prix Foy (4.35), with two-year-olds catered for by the Prix de la Salamandre (4.05). The Niel, Salamandre and Foy will be shown live, and a recording of the Vermeille, on BBC2.

Geoff Wragg runs Pentre, the King George winner, in the Prix Foy, in which the sternest opposition could come from Andre Fabre's Coronation Cup winner, Swan.

The Prix Niel features the reappearance of the Arc favourite, Helios, who returns after a summer break. He may have most to fear from the Ago Khan's well-regarded Darazari and Peter Chappelle's Polaris Flight.

The Prix Vermeille has drawn Bint Salsabil and Paperino from Britain. However, Fabre could have the answer with his three-strong challenge of Miss Tahiti, Lura Wells and Tulipa.

Fabre's juvenile, Zamindar, returns after a surprise defeat in the Prix Morny at Deauville to tackle a field which includes Chappelle-Hyam's Revoque, re-routed from the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster.

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GOING: FIRM (CHASE COURSE GOOD TO FIRM) SIS

2.25 POLLY HOWES CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (2.19: 2m 12m) (12 runners)

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## FOOTBALL

# Follow me, Franny and we can rewrite story of the Blues

MICHAEL HENDERSON



My bid for Maine Road hot-seat

It has been a splendid week for Manchester traditions. The long-awaited Bridgewater Hall opened on Wednesday night, providing the Halle Orchestra with a spanking new venue. Manchester City merely took a spanking. Two weeks after Alan Ball left Maine Road with everybody's blessing, they are no nearer appointing his successor.

Down the years, City have supplied plenty of laughs to a grateful nation, and it does the heart good to see this glorious comedy developing a new storyline. Proper Mancunians, who know that City are the true club of Manchester, do not mind joining in. We look down our noses at the fly-by-nights and out-of-towners who flock to watch the other lot. Goodness gracious, they do not even play in the city.

The world is waiting to see what kind of man City will appoint this time. Since winning the old League Cup in 1976 under Tony Book, who seems to have been there longer than the Romanovs ruled Russia, they have engaged every kind of manager, bobbing between the divisions like a stricken clipper on the high seas. Now Francis Lee, the chairman, stares out from the poopdeck, scanning the horizon for some friendly sails.

Malcolm Allison had a high public profile. Mel Machin none at all. Howard Kendall was proven. Brian Horton went behind the ears. John Bond talked a good game. Alan Ball, in the end, did not talk at all, though he lived down to his reputation — "If you want to fall, send for Ball". Now they want to bring back Kendall, ignoring what the Yanks know: you cannot go home again.

So I say to Franny: look no further. I followed you to Maine Road as a young fan when you left Bolton Wanderers 29 years ago this week, and I am confident that we can

establish a sound working relationship, so long as you support my five-point blueprint for the club's regeneration. Together, we could put the club back on its feet.

I set up a Checkpoint Charlie outside the main entrance to halt the tidal wave of duff Germans to Moss Side.

Perhaps Book, that man for all seasons, could supervise this quality control procedure by doing sentry duty, adopting a severe manner and asking

'Set up a checkpoint to halt wave of duff Germans to Moss Side'

all who seek to pass: "Your names, please? It would carry no guarantee of success, but, in a greatcoat and a monocle, he would make a good turn at the Christmas panto.

2. Clean the titter between the practice ground and the field of play; at the moment, there is an obvious lack of communication.

As coach, it is hard to look beyond the Wye Bird, the lead in that excellent children's

## Bitter-sweet reunion for old boys

By DAVID MADDOCK

GARY McALLISTER and Gordon Strachan, the brain and lungs of the Leeds United side that won the championship under Howard Wilkinson, face their former club today with genuine regret that their long-term mentor will not be in opposition.

McAllister and Strachan, now respectively captain and assistant manager at Coventry City, provide the opposition for George Graham's first match in charge of Leeds.

"I had a lot of highs with Leeds," McAllister said. "It was a big part of my life, the club where I made my name and won trophies. I was a champion there and we went to Wembley, so it will always be part of me. I was there for six years and the club still means so much to me, so I hope the changes they have made are good ones."

In particular, the Scotland captain is concerned with the way that Wilkinson was treated towards the end of his reign. "I'm sad for Howard, I know he has been criticised for some of his decisions in the east, but the players simply haven't done it for him; they have let him down," he said.

The appointment of George Graham as manager was the best known secret at Leeds, even before my transfer. As soon as the Caspian group took over, he was linked with the job, so it came as no surprise to me when it happened. Howard spent money on the right sort of players, but then they got rid of him. It is strange he has been given the money, and then sacked so quickly."

## Colney take 50p bus ride to glory

DETALING two claims to sporting fame in London Colney is easy enough (Keith Pike writes). The Hertfordshire village is home to Arsenal's training ground and a handy junior rugby club. Pushed for a third, and Colney would probably have to settle for the fact that the nearby supermarket sells replica shirts. Certainly, most of them are far more likely to spend Saturday afternoons shopping than checking out the local football team. Sainsbury's, though, has

television programme, *Playdays*. She speaks in a sing-song Welsh voice that compels the listener's attention and, having wings, she could flutter higher and higher during matches, cooing encouragement to the players and disrupting opponents.

3. Revert immediately to the 2-3-3 formation that won City their last championship, in 1968, and restore the clean blue shirts and the scarlet-trimmed socks.

It is asking a bit much of Franny to put on his old togs and roar down the wing as he used to, but perhaps we could attach a life-size cut-out model to a track beside the touchline, and give him a couple of spins in each half. For old times' sake, he might take the occasional tumble when he gets near the penalty area.

4. Instal a cabal of prominent City supporters to gee up the dressing-room, which is a miserable place. Howard Davies, the deputy governor of the Bank of England, is the natural choice as chairman.

Bob Willis can dispense the wine, Bernard Manning provide the ha-has and John Stalker conduct a thorough, unthundered inquiry into the club's shoot-to-miss policy.

Then there is that bloody awful pop group that always appears to be breaking up. They can clean the toilets.

5. As a goodwill gesture to the city, the club could form a choral society from among its former managers and players, and present a concert at the aforementioned Bridgewater Hall, at the end of each season. First up, Mahler's *Symphony of a Thousand*.

That is the survival plan on which I stake my reputation. Let anybody suggest that it is proposed in jest, consider the feast of entertainment year in, year out, for the past two decades and answer this: who is joking?

Well, maybe next year.

## Nadal on verge of signing for United

By PETER BALL AND DAVID MADDOCK

MANCHESTER United expect to sign Miguel Angel Nadal, the Spain defender, for about £2.4 million from Barcelona early next week. After watching United's game in Turin on Wednesday, Nadal had talks with Barcelona yesterday and is expected to arrive in Manchester to complete negotiations at the beginning of the week.

"We are getting closer and he should be here on Tuesday, possibly even Monday," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, said. "We agreed a fee with Barcelona two or three weeks ago and, providing that figure hasn't changed, I think we're on.

However, Harford believes that he may just have the short-term answer in the shape of Chris Sutton, his returning forward. "We have lacked a leader up front since Alan went," he said. "We have plenty of forwards, but none who has the presence to lead the line. I always thought Chris would be our best option because the supporters have already accepted him."

"I don't want to put too much pressure on the lad, but Chris looks the replacement. I never thought they would work as a partnership because Chris wanted to be leader, not No 2 behind Alan. Now he's got his chance," Harford's chances may also rest on the four-year contract.

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It is enough to have Harford, the Blackburn Rovers manager, jerking instinctively for the P45. The irony is not lost on him. Shearer's departure ripped the heart out of his rebuilding plans at the worst moment.

Harford, though, is not unduly worried by the prospect of visiting St James' Park today, even though he readily

admits that another defeat will serve only to pile more pressure on him and his team. "It was the timing of Alan's departure that was the real blow," he said. "I honestly believe we were getting close to fitting together all the pieces of the jigsaw."

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Ray Harford, despite his air of cheerful indifference, has every right to be a worried man. One point from five FA Carling Premiership matches and who happens along next? Alan Shearer and Newcastle United, his new club.

It is enough to have Harford, the Blackburn Rovers manager, jerking instinctively for the P45. The irony is not lost on him. Shearer's departure ripped the heart out of his rebuilding plans at the worst moment.

Harford, though, is not unduly worried by the prospect of visiting St James' Park today, even though he readily

admits that another defeat will serve only to pile more pressure on him and his team. "It was the timing of Alan's departure that was the real blow," he said. "I honestly believe we were getting close to fitting together all the pieces of the jigsaw."

"Then, right at the end of the summer, Alan insisted he wanted to leave. There was nothing we could do about it in the end and it left us with no time to put the jigsaw back together."

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## GOLF 44

De Lorenzi tames course on way to record '64

# SPORT

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 1996

## Internal combustion halts Arsenal

**Brian Glanville follows a trail of mismanagement that has undermined the finer traditions of Highbury**

**A**rsenal may feel that a waiting for Wenger is like waiting for Godot. Only on Monday will Arsène Wenger, their new manager, know whether Nagoya Grampus Eight, his Japanese club, is prepared to release him at the end of this month, rather than in January.

In the meantime, Arsenal yesterday lost Stewart Houston, their acting manager. Previously a No 2 under George Graham and Bruce Rioch, Houston resigned with two years of his contract left to run.

His place, at least for Arsenal's home game with Sheffield Wednesday on Monday, will be taken by Pat Rice, the youth team manager last season, a former captain of Arsenal and Northern Ireland, and a cheerfully resilient figure, as indeed he will need to be.

**U**nseen heroes have title in sight

BY MICHAEL HENDERSON

**C**HESTER-LE-STREET (second day of four): Leicestershire (24pts) beat Durham (2) by an innings and 251 runs

**N**EXT Thursday, on a dowdy ground in a city that could hardly care less about cricket, Leicestershire will expect to win the county championship for the first time since 1975, and for only the second time in their history. This overwhelming victory, completed inside two days, has put them within inches of the summit. If they beat Middlesex at Grace Road, they can claim the pole.

It is not difficult to know what it will mean to the people of Leicester: zilch. The civic indifference to cricket was underlined by the decision of the city's evening paper not to cover this game, reckoning — no doubt correctly — that it was never going to knock rugby and football off the back page. Whitaker joked that

### SCOREBOARD

**DURHAM:** First Innings 128 (P V Simmons 6 for 14).

Second Innings

S J L Campbell c Milns b Milns 0

S Hutton lbw b Wells 17

T D G C Liggett bowled by Wells 9

J A Waller c Nixon b Wells 25

J M Morris c Nixon b Wells 25

M A Fazackerley c Nixon b Mullally 27

D A Bankerton not out 23

M J Bennett c Mullally b Wells 7

A J Whittaker c Mullally b Wells 8

S J E Brown c Mullally b Wells 8

S J Harrison c Mullally b Wells 4

Extras (b 1, lb 0, nb 6) 15

Total (8 wickets, dec. 99.2 overs) 139

Fall of WICKETS 1-94, 3-41, 4-49,

5-90, 6-92, 7-98, 8-109, 9-121

BOWLING: Morris 8-23-4, Parsons 8-0,

35-0; Wells 14-3-4-1; Fazackerley 9-1,

11-2; Waller 13-3-5-1; Campbell 8-2-1,

3-0; Nixon 1-1; Bankerton 1-0

Umpires: D J Constant and A A Jones

**LEICESTERSHIRE:** First Innings

V J Wells b Walker 28

D M Morris c and b Barnett 82

B Fazackerley b Barnett 82

G J Macmillan c Doherty b Bankerton 0

P V Simmons c Campbell 171

J M Nixon c and b Barnett 120

W J A Nixon not out 103

Extras (b 10, w 5, nb 44) 59

Total (8 wickets, dec. 99.2 overs) 516

A J Whittaker, G J Parsons, D J Mather and A D Mullally did not bat.

Fall of WICKETS 1-81, 2-82, 3-23,

4-96, 5-116, 6-142, 7-159, 8-169,

9-181, 10-196, 11-211, 12-226

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## Cracks appear as ringmaster Bossi leads his troupe on independence trail

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN TURIN

AS THE leader of the Northern League, Umberto Bossi, began his three-day "March along the Po" last night to declare "independence" for northern Italy, there were signs that his demand for secession was causing splits within a federal Italy.

Irene Pivetti, the former parliamentary Speaker and the most high-profile League member after Signor Bossi, was expelled from

the party for describing the League leader as a "destructive demagogue" who had single-handedly adopted a policy of secession for "Padania", the League's term for northern Italy, without consulting the rank and file. She said that most League members supported her in favouring a "less extreme" policy of local autonomy within a federal Italy.

Signor Bossi used a Murano glass container yesterday to collect water from an icy mountain stream at Plan del Re, the source of

the Po, 6,500ft above sea level in the spectacular western Alps near Turin. The event is commemorated by the words "Padania-Po" and the date, carved on a small black granite slab nearby.

Later he attended a rally and fireworks display in Turin. He is taking the water and a handful of soil by helicopter, boat and catamaran to Venice — the proposed "capital" of Padania — where he will declare Padanian independence tomorrow.

But the mayors of the Cuneo

region, where the source of the Po is situated, denied Italian tricolour sashes to issue a joint statement condemning secession and praising Italian unity. An opinion survey in Milan, published in *La Repubblica*, said that only 3.6 per cent supported secession, a drop from 6 per cent in July.

Signora Pivetti said she learnt of her expulsion from the television news. She said the march along the Po had become a "circus". Secession was Signor Bossi's personal view and had never been

sanctioned by the party. "I cannot take this march seriously," she said. "This mythical worship of the God Po is offensive to me as a Catholic."

There was also dissent within the League over a call by Roberto Calderoli, secretary of the League in Lombardy, for teachers from southern Italy to be excluded from northern Italian schools to make way for "real Padanians". He said he was not a racist, but schools and the civil service had been "colonised by southerners".

The League gained a third of the vote in its northern strongholds in April's general election, but has no popular mandate for "independence". Romano Prodi, the Prime Minister, said that the Government would not allow Italy "to go down the path of Czechoslovakia", let alone Yugoslavia, and pledged further investment in the South.

Signor Bossi said that there would be a "fully independent" Padania within a year, with its own parliament, currency, identity cards and militia. An embryo mil-

itia exists in the form of the party stewards, who all wear green shirts. *Corriere della Sera* said Signor Bossi's activities amounted to "a treasonous coup d'état".

Many anti-Bossi protests are planned for today, including a rally in Verona by the right-wing opposition Forza Italia, led by Silvio Berlusconi, the former Prime Minister, and one by the post-Fascist Alleanza Nazionale in Milan. Gianfranco Fini, its leader, said more people would turn out for his rally than for Signor Bossi's.

## Key ministers quit sickbeds to clinch Kohl austerity win

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

MINISTERS were hauled from their sickbeds and back-bench deputies were flattered, bullied and bought to protect Helmut Kohl's wide-ranging package of spending cuts, which yesterday scraped through the German parliament. Neither the rhetoric of the Social Democratic opposition — "social betrayal" — nor the shrill whistles of trade union demonstrators could topple the German Chancellor's majority.

At stake were four pieces of legislation that form an important component of Herr Kohl's €20 billion savings package: restrictions on sick-pay; a move to make it easier to dismiss workers; raising the retirement age; and changes in the health system. On Thursday, the Bundesrat — the upper house which represents Germany's 16 provincial states — voted the legislation. The chamber is dominated by the Social Democrats, and the block was predictable. The Government, however, was able to overturn the veto in the lower chamber by rallying 50 per cent of the House plus one additional member.

In practice, that meant Herr Kohl would lose not only the one but the whole impetus for his modernising reforms if five deputies defected. In the end, party discipline held and the Chancellor won the day.

Drivers were ready at the rack of dawn to ferry Jochen Tackert, the Agriculture Minister, and Michael Glos,

the Christian Social Union floor leader, from their convalescence after surgery to vote for a law that will shorten their paid sick-leave. Eastern German Christian Democrats blustered on the evening before the vote, but eventually swung behind the Chancellor after apparently securing a promise that there will be no big cuts in job creation schemes there.

The Whips betrayed signs of nervousness. Herr Kohl, sitting legs akimbo and sucking sweets, seemed cheerfully confident. But he must have remembered the near-fiasco of November 1994, when the parliament was supposed to take the purely symbolic step of confirming him in office after a general election. One little-known Christian Democrat deputy, Roland Richter, overslept and arrived with only minutes to spare. Herr

Richter's career has not been flourishing since.

The most symbolic piece of legislation to go through yesterday was the sick-pay reform. Until the amendments were passed yesterday, ill German workers were allowed six weeks off with 100 per cent pay. But compensation was based on the pay, overtime and bonuses received in the period before the sick-leave.

In many cases, workers could thus earn more by being ill than by turning up for work. Opel, the car manufacturer, for example, estimated that it paid about 120 per cent of basic pay to workers on sick-leave. The situation has become so critical that some companies engage private detectives to check on those registered as ill.

The Chancellor's amendments, which will now come into effect on October 1, aim to cut sick payment to 80 per cent of full pay. That should save companies hundreds of millions of marks a year — but it hits at one of the central pillars of the German welfare state, and has the trade unions up in arms. The strategic point is to ensure that Germany remains competitive with other Western countries, and to ensure a continual flow of inward investment. American companies, in particular, are becoming nervous about setting up factories in Germany where workers are so comprehensively protected.

Kohl anxiously awaits the vote yesterday



Chefs party: the Swiss team celebrates after winning the gold medal in the Berlin Food Olympics. More than 1,000 cooks from 30 countries took part. The Swiss edged out Norway with a rolled veal tenderloin and lamb roast

## EU schism worries Redwood

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN AMSTERDAM

EU federalists who encourage regional devolution against national governments are playing with fire, John Redwood told a German and Dutch audience at the University of Amsterdam yesterday.

Referring to demonstrations in northern Italy this weekend, Mr Redwood said that EU governments and officials were making an alliance of convenience with regional separatists in the hope that splitting nation states would help in the creation of a federal Europe.

"I would advise them not to play with the fire of regional devolution against national authorities," he said. "Unthinking support for regional movements will tear states apart and help to create political parties which are hardly likely to want to submit to the rule of a bigger, European federal state."

## Floating voter sees Bosnian victory for Abdic

FROM ANTHONY LOYD IN VELIKA KLAJUSA

AS HE votes today in the Bosnian elections, Ibrahim

polis, sees Velika Kladusa as a tinderbox of intra-Muslim hatred and one area for violence during the elections.

dangerous time to talk of politics," said Ibrahim, who at heart is still an Abdic supporter. "People talk of democratic elections but there is no democracy here.

"Look at the campaign here, you only see SDA posters of [President] Izetbegovic, yet probably 30,000 people of the 45,000 here shall vote for Abdic. Why?" He catalogues a list of intimidations and beatings against Abdic supporters by police who have quelled support for the politician.

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is running the

elections, sees Velika Kladusa as a

tinderbox of intra-Muslim hatred and one area for violence

during the elections.

But Ibrahim disagrees.

"Electoral day probably won't be too much problem as there will be many Nato troops here. But what afterwards? We all want Abdic to return [from Zagreb] because he offers us a better life but, if he does, there will be fighting. Ultimately the future of our peace, war and politics is all down to [President] Clinton. As far as Bosnians are concerned, God rules all of heaven, and America rules all on earth."

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217/07

# Dole challenges Clinton to show medical records

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

SUCH a question would have been unthinkable of any previous President, but it has now been asked of Bill Clinton. Does he have venereal disease or AIDS?

Reporters put the question to Mike McCurry, the White House press secretary, on Thursday after Bob Dole demanded to know why Mr Clinton was refusing to release his health records. "Good God, do you really want to raise that question? That's an astonishing question," Mr McCurry retorted before offering a firm denial. American journalists covering Mr Clinton's campaign trip agonised over whether to report the ground-breaking exchange, and many did not.

Mr Dole and his surrogates have been implying that the

President is hiding something. They call his refusal to release anything more than summaries of his regular health checks a "mystery". They joke about hearing "pretty colourful guesses" as to what the records might contain. There have been oblique allusions to the allegations of womanising and drug abuse heaped on Mr Clinton by right-wing foes.

On Thursday Mr Dole stepped up his demand: "Let's have your health records, Mr President," he declared at a rally in Kentucky, and Mr McCurry was finally forced to respond. He accused Mr Dole of manufacturing an issue because he had "nothing else left". He argued that the White House released regular summaries of the President's health, but also had a duty to

protect him from embarrassment and indignity. When pressed further, Mr McCurry snapped: "I'm talking about things like rectal exams. OK?"

It is unclear whether the Dole camp knows more than it is saying, but behind the sniping there is a serious issue. Numerous presidents have concealed illnesses. John Kennedy had Addison's disease. Dwight Eisenhower suffered from a heart attack, and Franklin Roosevelt hid his rapidly failing health to win a fourth term.

Most recent presidents have allowed their physicians to discuss their health with journalists, but not this one. During the 1992 campaign, Lawrence Altman, a doctor who interviewed Presidents Reagan and Bush about their medical histories for *The New York Times*, wrote: "Mr Clinton has been less forthcoming about his health than any presidential nominee in the past 20 years."

Faris Bouez, Lebanon's Foreign Minister, described the warning as blackmail aimed at forcing Lebanon to accept peace proposals put forward by the Government of Benjamin Netanyahu. "We reject this blackmail and threats aimed at dragging Lebanon to accept vague Israeli proposals," he added after talks in Damascus with President Assad.

The mysterious reports of widespread movements by Syria's occupying army in Lebanon caused alarm among Israelis about to begin celebrations of the Jewish New Year holiday, Rosh Hashanah.

Soon after taking office, Mr Clinton dismissed Burton Lee, the White House physician, reportedly because he refused to administer an allergy injection without first seeing the President's medical records.

Mr Dole has released all his records, but he is 73, a survivor of prostate cancer, and suffered war wounds that cost him a kidney and the use of his right arm. He had little choice if he was to persuade voters he was fit enough to take on the world's most demanding job.

## Israeli rocket raids in Lebanon

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

TENSION worsened on both sides of Israel's northern border yesterday as Israeli helicopters fired rockets at Hezbollah bases in southern Lebanon and Israeli troops responded to unusual movements among the 40,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon.

Hours before the helicopter attack, Israeli soldiers ambushed members of an Iranian-backed Hezbollah (Party of God) squad which had infiltrated the Israeli-held buffer zone in southern Lebanon. One of the guerrillas was killed.

The fighting was followed by Israeli artillery bombardment of targets north of the security zone.

A senior Lebanese Foreign Ministry official said Beirut was taking seriously a warning by Israel's proxy militia in south Lebanon of widespread Israeli retaliation if Hezbollah intensified its attacks on Israeli troops.

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## 'Picasso' found in drugs raid

Salvadorean were doing a drugs deal. The supposed masterpiece was left behind by three men who fled

(Gabriela Gamini in Bogota writes). The painting is believed to have once belonged to Pablo Escobar Gaviria, the notorious Colombian drugs baron shot dead in 1993 by a Colombian anti-narcotics marksman.

## Island snub to China

Peking: The Japanese Government said yesterday it did not have the authority to stop right-wing protesters from setting up a lighthouse on a disputed island in the East China Sea (James Pringle writes).

A long-shelved sovereignty squabble between Japan, China and Taiwan over the uninhabited islands, known as the Diaoyus to Peking and Senkakus to Tokyo, broke out in July after the Japan Youth Federation raised the lighthouse, infuriating China and Taiwan, and prompting anti-Japanese demonstrations.

The Japanese right-wing group sailed to the islands again this week, repairing the aluminium lighthouse damaged by a typhoon last month.

## Tanzania hotel cashier killed

Dar es Salaam: Gunmen posing as tourists shot dead a hotel cashier in northern Tanzania, three days after armed bandits ambushed 25 Italian and American tourists in the nearby Serengeti National Park, according to sources at the Impala hotel in Arusha, where the shooting took place. The killing highlighted growing security problems around one of Africa's best-known game parks. (Reuters)

## Russian missile launchers looted

Moscow: Mobile launchers for surface-to-air missiles at a defence unit near Moscow are paralysed because soldiers stripped off parts and sold them, a Defence Ministry official said. He refused to say how many launchers had been crippled and insisted the unit's effectiveness was intact. The stolen parts were valued at £1.4 million. (AP)

## Burglar dies

New York: A burglar was crushed to death in an office here when a 600lb safe he was trying to steal toppled on to him (Quentin Letts writes). There were no valuables or cash in the safe.

## President's Tinseltown groupies pay up and eat up

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

"LIMOUSINE liberal" yelled a lone Republican protester as the presidential motorcade purred through Beverly Hills towards the season's costliest dinner.

Had the grinning President not been deafened by his bulletproof glass he might have admitted it was partly true: nothing shorter than a limo passed muster at Thursday's \$4 million (£2.6 million) fundraiser in his

honour, held in the mansion where Francis Ford Coppola filmed some of *The Godfather's* goriest scenes.

Mr Clinton the candidate and Mr Clinton the film buff were one and the same as he thanked 1,000 of the wealthiest Democrats in showbusiness "from the bottom of my heart". Lured by the repartee of Tom Hanks and Barbra Streisand's now customary election year concert they had raised four times as much in one night as Hollywood's Republicans have in the entire year. Sharon Stone. Michael

Douglas, Robin Williams and a prominent British representative in the former *Monty Python's Flying Circus* member, Eric Idle, were among those paying up to \$12,500 each for dinner with the First Couple. A \$5,000 ticket bought a photo-opportunity with the President: \$1,000 a mere back seat at the concert.

Performing on a full-size stage, set up in what was once Harold Lloyd's back garden, Ms Streisand set the evening's gushing tone with a new version of *The Way We Were*. "The

White House won't permit a third-term president," she sang, "but with Al Gore/Maybe eight more" years of Democrats in the Oval Office would follow.

Mr Clinton singled out his favourite singer as "my friend", but it was David Geffen, the recording billionaire, who personified Hollywood's Democratic allegiance. Though he kept a low profile at the gala, he organised it and two intimate presidential dinner parties this year that raised \$2 million from just 12 guests.

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Bonn is getting steamed up over system that allows taxpayers free treatment every three years

## On-tap spa cures dry up

**BADEN-BADEN FILE**  
by MICHAEL KALLENBACH

ONCE the playground of European aristocracy, German health spas have until recently been virtually a way of life for millions of ordinary citizens. But that is soon to change, and now the mere mention of the word *Kur* (cure) has become controversial.

The Government is no longer willing to support a system that lets taxpayers take a free, four-week spa treatment every three years to repair tired and aching bodies, in addition to allowing generous annual holiday entitlements. By curbing the number of weeks Germans may undertake a *Kur*, Helmut Kohl, the sauna-loving Chancellor,

hopes to save some DM3.6 billion (£1.5 billion) a year.

While Germany might have more spas than any other country, it has not necessarily made its people any healthier. Sweeping away mental cobwebs and uplifting the spirit through a regimen of physical therapy and gentle amusements have not convinced Germans to give up drinking, smoking or eating the way they do. One need

long-faded past, when European royalty used to spend the summer season here gurgling amidst the volcanic spring waters and walking their dogs along the fashionable and leafy Lichtenstrasse, next to the man-made stream.

Queen Victoria had a villa here,

but this has since been torn down: the English church has also gone, replaced by one for the German Lutherans. Edward VII was a regular guest and was flattered when Bad Homburg, another famous spa town not far from Frankfurt, was named after his penchant for wearing that town's style of hat.

But nowadays it is the Russians

who are trying to revive much of

the town's former glory. A local resident, Renate Eifern, is busy

writing a tome on the influence

Russians had on the town and

predicts an influx of Russian visitors in the coming years. It was all

started by Tsar Aleksandr I, who

stopped off in the area on his way to

Paris in 1813 to sign a peace treaty,

having driven Napoleon out of

Russia. He brought with him his

rich aristocratic officers, who later

came back to Baden-Baden to build

palatial homes and villas. Un-



Visitors take the waters at elegant Baden-Baden. For many Germans, spa treatments are a way of life

doubtedly, the wealthiest of the

Russians at the time was Prince

Menshikov, who flagrantly dis-

obeyed the rules and drove his

chariot along the Lichtenstrasse.

When local police accosted him, he

threw gold coins at them and they

simply looked the other way. But

not only the wealthy and frivolous

came to enjoy the hot thermal

springs. Both Dostoevsky and Tur-

genev set part of their respective

novels, *The Gambler* and *Smoke*,

in Baden-Baden.

## New-style gamblers cultivated

GERMANS are proud of their casinos: Marlene Dietrich said the one in Baden-Baden was the world's most beautiful.

Profits from gambling have helped to restore cathedrals and town halls; they even helped to finance the 1972 Olympics in Munich. But in Baden-Baden the needs are different and they help to pay for mowing the lawns, tending the flowerbeds and tree trimming.

The casino's director is Baron Hartmann von Richthofen, a nephew of Baron Manfred — the famous 'Red Baron' who shot down 80 allied warplanes in the First World War — and a cousin of the former German Ambassador to the Court of St James's.

Unlike the old days, casin-

os can no longer rely on

royalty to bolster their earn-

ings. Nowadays, members of

the new Russian elite are

regularly seen on the casino

circuit.

## Masters of the fast lane

**FAST and fancy cars continue to arrive in Baden-Baden every weekend, and their German owners are looking rather smug. Yet another survey, designed to flatter the German driver, has appeared out of the blue. For the second year running, Germans have voted themselves the best drivers in Europe. While there is general**

**agreement that they certainly abide by the rules of the road, the overall results of the survey are slightly surprising since drivers on the autobahn know no speed limits. Ironically, the survey hails former East Germans as the best of the nation's drivers — particularly those who own cars that are more than 35 years old.**

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## Spanish 'football widows' tackle TV match mania

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN MADRID

SPANISH "football widows" are striking back. Weary of being scorned in favour of televised soccer by their couch-potato husbands and boyfriends, a group of purposeful señoritas have formed a national "Association of Women Abandoned for Football".

Their objectives are to reclaim household television sets, and bring those draft men back to their senses.

Football mania is relentless in Spain this month. As a result of a patchwork of deals concluded recently between clubs and television channels, a match is now broadcast live every night of the week except Friday. This expanded coverage, which ensnares most men to the set between 8pm and 10pm, is believed to be worth 220,000 million pesetas (more than £1 billion) to the football clubs over a seven-year period.

Naturally, marital discord is reaching dizzy heights, with husbands less inclined to be uxorious while the season is in progress. Cases have been recorded of men beating spouses for switching channels or for objecting to the raucous presence at home of "a few mates".

As a result, the "abandoned women's" association, founded by Madrid bar-owner Margarita Pérez, has decided to "do something". Executive

members meet at her bar on match nights to discuss strategy. "We will soon see who abandons whom," Señora Pérez threatens darkly.

Inspired by their example, women are beginning to be more assertive. A Madrid cleaner, Margarita, 57, said:

"At my age there's no point in threatening to kick my husband out of bed. But I have refused to make him fried peppers and Spanish omelets for dinner, things he likes to eat in front of the set." Other women have gone on ironing and shopping strikes, or have defiantly sold the family set while their husbands are at work. Several have stopped cooking until a second television is bought.

The Restaurant Federation of Spain is also complaining. "We could lose up to a third of our takings this year because of football," said a spokesman, adding: "We will have to lay off waiters and cooks soon."

Bar owners have issued a warning that they will boycott the products of companies that advertise on television during football matches. Agustín Vidaurreta, a Barcelona barman, said: "There are a few beers that we have stopped stocking already. We have to fight this football madness any way we can."

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23Typical example. If you borrow £



## ■ OPINION

What was the point of recreating Shakespeare's Globe if we don't want to get closer to his type of theatre?



## ■ POP

They should sound terribly dry. But Skunk Anansie turn out to be an intriguing prospect in performance

THE TIMES  
ARTS

## ■ PROMS

The Albert Hall resounds to mesmerising sounds from Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony



Judi Dench is set to return to the National Theatre to star in David Hare's new play, *Amy's View*

Can there be any concept that divides the arts world so comprehensively as that dread word "authenticity"? I don't mean divide in the sense that everybody argues about it all the time. I mean that the question of authenticity — of whether the punter is being offered the genuine article or a fake — matters hugely in some cultural spheres, and not a whit in others. Very confusing, but very revealing too.

Let's recall what might be called the "authentic sensitive" areas. First, there is the visual-art market, which is based on the illogical but unshakable premise that a genuine Old Master should be "worth millions more than an imitation, no matter how superb the latter's quality. What's more, there is a quite separate (and deliciously vicious) debate in the museum world at present about how much an old painting should be "restored" to its supposedly original colours, or how legitimate it is to "mend" broken fragments of ancient sculptures.

## It's the real thing, but who cares?

So in the visual arts the question of authenticity is paramount nearly all the time. If you doubt that, try picking your own dead sheep and see if a Cork Street art dealer offers you the sort of price that Damien Hirst gets for his. In the art business, as in high fashion, it's the label that counts.

Much the same questions of authenticity were faced in the music world 20 years ago. Indeed, when the first recordings emerged of Bach and Handel played in painstakingly revived 18th-century style, sympathetic critics invariably wrote of "scrapping off the varnish" from the music. Unsympathetic critics, of course, complained that it was the emotion which was being scraped off.

But the authenticity lobby carried the day. Today you rarely hear Baroque music played professionally on anything except period

instruments, and they have continued their advance into the 19th-century repertoire. The composer's word is law: banished forever are the wilful "improvements" of earlier generations. It's been a revolution, and often a revelation. Far from restricting emotion, period-instrument ensembles have set new standards in virtuosity and pathos.

So why, another large sector of the arts regard the idea of authenticity as laughable? I refer to what happens in our theatres. This autumn the Royal Opera is staging Wagner's *Ring*. It will be a bizarre and incongruous occasion. In the pit, the great conductor Bernard Haitink will strain every sinew to capture faithfully Wagner's late-Romantic sound-world. But on stage will be a production that bears about as much relation to Wagner's detailed stage instruc-

tions as I do to Zorba the Greek. The Royal Opera is only tamely following the pattern around the world. You could go to the opera every night for a year, in a dozen countries, and never once see

Mozart, Verdi or Wagner staged as the composer might have recognised.

It is claimed that such self-important "concept" stagings bring in new, younger audiences by making the operas "relevant". The reverse is true. "Designer opera" is so filled full of in-jokes and nudge-nudge post-modernism, that it alienates first-timers. That's why many people (including top conductors) now prefer opera in concert rather than on stage. At least punters can enjoy the tunes without wondering whether Mimi is about to overdose on heroin.

In the spoken theatre, too, the same process has happened. Surely the point of scrupulously recreating Shakespeare's Globe was to take us nearer to the performing tradition that embraced Shakespeare. Alas, such a notion appears risible to those

running the Globe. And to many drama critics as well.

The general feeling is that any attempted authentic staging is bound to be artificial and twee: exactly the same argument that was advanced, and utterly routed, in the music world two decades ago. Instead, we will probably see the same diet of spurious Shakespeare updates at the Globe as everywhere else. A unique opportunity will be squandered.

I am not pleading that every Shakespeare production casts boys in the women's roles, or that every Wagner staging presents enormous ladies in Viking helmets. I just wish that, now and then, somebody had the boldness to show us how stage gesture, speech cadences and costumes would have worked in the author's day. After all, the scholar-

ship already exists: it's gathering dust in libraries.

Unfortunately, ambitious young directors realise that they can make headlines by beating up the classics. And many older directors regard the author's text merely as vehicles for their own majestic egos. Perhaps they also think that if the same old repertoire is constantly being "reinvented" by eye-popping stagings, this will cover up the sad truth that there are so few new plays or operas that the public will pay to see.

But classics are classics; they need no help from New Luvvies on the Block. Present the texts with a proper sense of style, and audiences will find revelations for themselves. Otherwise posterity will look back on the late 20th century and say: Ah yes, those were the people who dared to muck around with the masterpieces of earlier generations because they didn't have the wit to devise masterpieces of their own. We have three years to prove posterity wrong.

POP: Stephen Dalton finds strident polemics much more accessible on stage; plus, rewind to 1964

## Teeth of their Skin

Skunk Anansie  
Astoria

LINDSAY MAGGS

Head and heart: Skin — bald, bisexual and fiercely committed — is a hyperactive live-wire in live performance

## When we were fab, not fat

Salute to the Sixties  
Wembley Arena

dozen lesser lights, are wheeled out for a charity show. Twenty-five acts hustled on and off the stage in about four hours. As haphazard musically as sartorially, the acts were performing without fee, which is commendable (they did all receive an award); a

few sounded as though they were performing without rehearsal.

Some were astonishing: they included Julie Rogers with *The Wedding*, John Leyton and *Johnny Remember Me* (with Maggie Stedder of the Vervins Girls), Reg Presley and his Troggs with *Wild Thing*, the Merseybeats with *Sorrow*, Dozy, Beaky, Mick and Tich (Dave Dee was not missed) with *Hold Tight* and *Legend of Xanadu*, Mike

Pender's *Searchers* with *Needles and Pins*, Dave Berry with *The Crying Game* and Marmalade with *Reflections*. It was as though we had all been locked in since the place was called the Empire Pool.

The best moment was when Twinkle, magnificently blonde, svelte and youthful, launched into the doomed-biker saga, *Terry*. She was backed by the Four Pennies, who had been murdering their own back-catalogue, but who suddenly found the right notes. Briefly, it was 1964 all over again.

TONY PATRICK

NEVER short of an opinion or two, the American comedian Jackie Mason is to subject the Oxford Union to one of his marathon monologues next month. The diminutive Borscht Belt star, whose one-man show *Love Thy Neighbour* is still pulling in audiences on Broadway, will speak at the Union on October 29, two days after he plays a one-night stand at the London Palladium and the day after

controversial appearance before the same audience earlier this year — will be high on the agenda.

• FRESH from her triumphant year-long run in *A Little Night Music*, Judi Dench is already planning her return to the National Theatre. The actress will star in *David Hare's* new play, *Amy's View*, which opens in June 1997 at the Lyttelton. Dench has appeared in Hare's *Wetherby* on screen and *Saigon: Year of the Cat* on television, but *Amy's View* marks her first appearance in a Hare stage play. The director is long-time Hare collaborator Richard Eyre; Bob Crowley designs.

• Jez Butterworth's award-winning play *Mojito* is coming to the screen, directed by the 27-year-old playwright. The six-week shoot will start on November 4 on the film, which is set in 1950s Soho. The stars are Ian Hart and Jim Broadbent. A premiere is hoped for at the Cannes Film Festival next May.

• FOR the first time since *Jesus Christ Superstar* in 1971, Andrew Lloyd Webber is opening a musical on Broadway and not in the West End. His adaptation of the novel and film *Whistle Down the Wind* has announced an April 17 opening at New York's Martin Beck Theatre, following a nine-week try-out in Washington, DC. Harold Prince directs.

## BBC PROMS: Chicago shines

## Big sound of the city

Chicago SO/  
Barenboim  
Albert Hall/Radio 3

Symphony, Barenboim showed that he is now as strong dealing with long symphonic spans as he has always been on dramatic incident, and he took an expansive but never slack view of the opening movement, while still pointing up seldom-heard details.

At every turn in Bruckner's massive symphony, there was playing to savour: most memorably, the serene cello theme of the Adagio, at once radiant and mournful, the incandescent upper strings at the close of that movement, and the sonorous brass that launched the finale so powerfully. But it was what Barenboim did with the sounds that mattered. He shaded the Adagio with subtlety, gradually gathering the music up in its steady progress towards a summit that was searingly intense, and the solemn finale had true Brucknerian spirituality.

JOHN ALLISON



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## ■ OPERA

ENO finds an appealing Violetta in Rosa Mannion, but that's not enough to save its new *La traviata*



## ■ GOING OUT

From Ervin Blumenfeld's gorgeous pictures of the grand and glamorous at the Barbican...



## ■ GOING OUT

... to Stewart Parker's remarkable play *Pentecost* at the Donmar, all the top events are in Weekend, page 14



■ MONDAY

Why Hollywood hunk Kurt Russell is making decisions behind the camera these days

OPERA: Rodney Milnes finds ENO's brilliant Violetta let down by wrong-headed musical direction

# Nipped in the musical bud

It is hard to write rationally about English National Opera's new *La traviata* in the context of a musical performance so mannered, dreary and plain wrong-headed, but here goes.

At least the essential ingredient for any staging is safely in place: a quite remarkable Violetta. Purely physically, Rosa Mannion might have been born to portray this doomed consumptive. She is beauty and looks fragile, vulnerable, hugely appealing. The director Jonathan Miller takes grateful advantage of this in his Medically Correct reading: breathlessness rather than

*La traviata*  
Coliseum

mere stage-coughing in the first act, and a bedridden last act in which she has not even the strength to sit up unaided when Alfredo returns.

I know she has to sing as well, but how cleverly Mannion suggests breathlessness through Verdi's phrasing in "Gran Dio! morir si giovane". This Violetta's unsparingly realistic death spasms are almost too painful to witness.

And Mannion's voice is as appealing as her presence, essentially soft-grained and sweet but with real strength and body in the middle-to-upper reaches. She shapes the lines with inborn eloquence and understanding; her account of "Addio del passato" (both verses, hooray) went straight to the heart, both of Verdi's music and that of the audience. Ideally one wants a little more edge to the tone for



Compulsive consumptive: John Hudson (as Alfredo) cradles the remarkable Rosa Mannion (as the dying Violetta) in ENO's new *La traviata*

the hysteria of the first act, and she could make more of the words of Edmund Tracey's faithful, tactfully revised translation, but this was her first Violetta, already a strong achievement, and she will get better and better.

Miller's production is simplicity itself, in a plain box set by Bernard Culshaw minimally adapted to suggest four locations, and period costumes

by Clare Mitchell that look really lived-in, without a whiff of Gainsborough Pictures daintiness. The society against which the drama is played out is of snuffily bourgeois respectability, but do the party scenes suggest strongly enough the corruption, the hypocritical empty-headedness beneath the surface?

But Miller and the American baritone Christopher Rob-

ertson — making his house debut — get Father Germont just a stuffy, thoughtless old man who thinks he is doing the right thing. His son Alfredo is also a bit of a stick, but John Hudson sings the role beautifully, with long, unbroken lines warmly moulded. Baron (Ashley Holland), Doctor (Andrew Greenan), Marquis (Roberio

Salvatori) are neatly sketched in. It is a production that leaves everything to the music.

Alas, the music simply is not there, and I am not just referring to the cuts and omissions in a lazy version of the text very much out of joint with the spirit of the times.

Nowadays we tend to pay

Verdi the compliment of performing what he wrote, and once you start tinkering with so carefully crafted a score, the whole dramatic structure starts to wobble.

Not that there was much drama of any kind in Steven Mercurio's reading. It is not

just that most of his tempos

were leadenly slow: he indulged in sentimental riddanders towards the end of almost every musical paragraph and the music limped disastrously. He also applied "art" to Verdi's big-boned lines, little tenutos and catches of musical breath, and the effect was inauspicious to say the least: not even the Admiralty, as one of those Herniones once said, could be so arch. The overall musical picture was soft-edged, precious and sentimental, not adjectives normally associated with Verdi. I thought it perfectly horrible.

## MYSTERIES OF ANCIENT CHINA

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Resolute rather than ferocious, he seems proud to have been chosen to make sure that his Emperor comes to no harm on his journey to the other world.

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MONDAY: A jade suit fit for a prince

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Sat 7.30pm

# Gaitskell, Blair and the party

Brian Brivati recalls Labour's lost leader and his modernising legacy

**O**n Sunday, October 11, 1959, *Reynolds News* carried an article by Ivan Yates calling for the Labour Party to break its links with the trade unions. The then leader of the party, Hugh Gaitskell, dismissed the talk as nonsense: the link with the unions, which were then mostly on the Right of the party and had helped to make him leader, was safe.

If yesterday's reports are correct and Tony Blair is planning to take the next logical step in his modernising of Labour, then he is also contemplating a leap in the dark. If the historic Labour Party ended when Clause Four was replaced, then a new political entity would be born if the unions and the party cut their links. Hitherto, Mr Blair's political adventure has not been without precedent. He is following in the footsteps of a public school and Oxford-educated economist who entered the Commons more than 50 years ago and died in 1963: Hugh Gaitskell.

Unlike Mr Blair, Gaitskell was happy to call himself a democratic socialist. He did not see himself as a social democrat, believing that the State should use planning, demand management, progressive taxation and public ownership to promote greater equality. He also believed that the British were unique and the Cold War worth fighting. His patriotism led him to oppose both unilateral disarmament and the terms negotiated by Harold Macmillan for British membership of the EEC.

Gaitskell believed that winning power mattered. He wanted Labour to be electable and his revisionism—the 1950s equivalent of today's modernisation—was designed to enhance Labour's electoral chances. He believed Labour was better equipped to run the mixed economy which the wartime coalition and the Attlee Government had created, and he had little faith in markets. Democratic socialism was setting the political agenda and the Conservatives were the ones on the defensive. Labour, although riddled with internal conflicts that made Mr Blair's disciplinary problems look like a ten dance, had a common underlying ideology.

Gaitskell was wedded to the Labour Party by deep intellectual and emotional ties, which is why his response to the loss of the 1959 election was to propose the replacement of Clause Four, the statement of the party's aims and values. He wanted to supplant the promise to extend public ownership with a coherent and extensive commitment to equality and personal freedom—and he failed. But his position was clear: if you modernise, you need to bring the basic ideology of the party with you. Labour must grow but it must also remain connected with its core beliefs. There are significant questions here for new Labour. Where is the ideological framework against which the initial decisions of Blair's ministers can be tested and from which they can derive the necessary strength to override Whitehall's agenda and begin to set their own?

Gaitskell believed that Britain mattered. His patriotism had two foundations: the Commonwealth, which involved Britain in a global role of political leadership, and the special relationship with the United States, which meant that Britain had to play its full part in the Cold War. He was then the only major figure in the Labour Party to denounce the Communist governments as comparable in their barbarity to Nazi Germany. For this, and for his opposition to unilateralism, he has suffered the lasting hatred of many on the Left.

Dr Brivati's biography of Gaitskell will be published on Monday by Richard Cohen Books.

GROWING fears of an attempt on the life of Imran Khan in Pakistan have forced him to take drastic measures. He has decided to carry a gun at all times in his native land. His return to Pakistan yesterday cast the only shadow over Thursday night's charity premiere of *Emma*, organised in aid of his cancer hospital in Lahore by his wife Jemima six weeks before she is due to give birth.

Friends at the premiere were

concerned that he has become a prime target for assassination after the launch of his own political party this year and his pledge to clean up corruption in his homeland. After his Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital in Lahore was bombed in April, killing six people and injuring 34, he said he wouldn't carry a gun or bring in police protection. Now he has changed his mind.

At a party before the screening of

*Emma*, he said that he could not afford bodyguards and that he would not countenance asking his billionaire father-in-law Sir James Goldsmith for help. "I think he agrees with me that it is not worth worrying about things you can do nothing about," he said. "Bombers are so sophisticated these days, if they want to get you they can. But I carry a gun now in Pakistan."



Assassination fears: Imran, armed for the struggle, and Jemima

Is public speaking a declining art? Peter Riddell compares the eloquence of past and present

## The old orators are still the best

speechwriter has contributed to the decline in oratory. Speeches are often hybrids, in part because of the time pressures on leading politicians. The results lack a coherent or uplifting theme. Only a skilled actor such as Reagan can convincingly deliver someone else's lines. In the past, politicians wrote most or all their speeches. A few such as Gladstone managed with minimal preparation, although Churchill spent long hours rehearsing and Lloyd George confessed he often made "many false starts".

The best orators today are veterans such as Tony Benn or Michael Heseltine, and those who learnt debating young. Malcolm Rilkind and Robin Cook have been exchanging barbs since their days at Edinburgh University 30 years ago, and their speeches are very much their own work. Perhaps the clearest pointer that oratory will be kept alive well into the next century comes from the inclusion in *Great Political Speeches* of William Hague's precocious debut at a Tory conference in 1977 as a 16-year-old Young Conservative, sounding like a 60-year-old knight of the shires.

*Great Political Speeches* (Hodder Headline/BBC, £9.99 cassette or £14.99 CD).

Anyone going to this autumn's party conferences expecting great oratory is likely to be disappointed. Partisan bombast and laboured soundbites there will be aplenty, but little which lingers in the memory to inspire, persuade or excite. It is the same in Parliament. Few MPs can now produce a rush by other Members into the chamber, or by journalists into the Press Gallery.

That can be justified just as middle-aged nostalgia. As my colleague Brian MacArthur argues in *The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches*, "Oratory is always a declining art. Every generation judges contemporary speakers unfavourably against the giants of the past." In 1914, there were complaints that oratory had given way to talk and the same was said after the arrival of radio, the cinema and television. The style of oratory has been changed by this communications revolution. Nearly a third of the electorate went to public meetings in the early 1950s: fewer than 3 per cent do now. The length of speeches has shortened from the regular two or three hours of Gladstone to the 75 minutes or less of recent compressed Budgets.

Oratory is not dead: political leaders still need to rouse their

followers if they are to succeed. My doubt is whether standards have declined—as is suggested by a new collection of archive recordings, *Great Political Speeches*. This complements a *Great Parliamentary Speeches*, produced last year and also compiled by Peter Hill, a veteran BBC correspondent. The two hours reverberate with the sounds of British politics, starting with a still powerful but high-pitched Gladstone in 1889. The giants are all there—Asquith, Lloyd George, Baldwin, Ramsay MacDonald, Churchill, Bevan, Macmillan and Gaitskell. I would quibble at the omission of Balfour, E.E. Smith and Mosley and at the inclusion of some run-of-the-mill modern contributions (for example, a shrill Lady Olga Maitland).

The older generation were more inspiring and moving. They talked

in paragraphs, not phrases, showing a feel for language and a sense of history. Nonconformity was as important as Balfour. Lloyd George acknowledged that his speeches were "founded on the oratory of the pulpit". But a change occurs from the 1960s, when television came of age. Presentation is now often staccato. Wisecracks have replaced wit. "The lady's not for turning" was invented to fill a headline space. Politicians know long speeches will not be reported, so they do not bother.

Of recent British politicians,

Baroness Thatcher was never "a natural orator", as is conceded by Sir Ronald Millar, who has added tone to the speeches of Tory leaders for two decades. In his memoir *A View from the Wings*, he adds that "growing skill in timing and sheer authority of manner made her a

speaker who could command a huge audience seemingly without effort". The same force of will rather than style has been shown by Tony Blair, while John Major has relied more on innate decency and a conversational manner.

Peggy Noonan, author of *Ronald Reagan's most memorable phrases*, argues in *What's at the Revolution* that people "no longer learn the rhythms of public utterance from Shakespeare and the Bible. The modern egalitarian impulse has made politicians leery of flaunting high rhetoric."

There has been a debasement of the political culture. The semi-detached Roy Jenkins and Chris Patten are rarities in attempting historical or literary allusions. But the fault lies also with people such as Noonan herself. The rise of the

## Emma the inimitable

The latest Austen adaptation is a far cry from the book—but there is room for both

**A**fter *Middlemarch* comes *Emma*. After the epic novel of the head comes the epic novel of the heart, tossed to the ravenous wolves of film and out this week. *Middlemarch* survived serialisation with only flesh wounds. Previous Jane Austen adaptations were slighter works that could withstand mauling. But what is *Emma*'s fate, torn from home and heart and carried across the sea to Hollywood?

I confess that man and boy, I have been in love with *Emma*. I stood with Mr Knightley by her father's Hartfield fireside watching her scheme with the emotions of her friends. As each scheme dissolved in her hands, I scolded, but felt for her anger. Other people's love seemed so wayward. *Emma* might be bored, selfish, malicious, a snob, but she was never quite a fool. She took each defeat hard but returned philanthropic to the fray, to set her microcosm of the world on the path to happiness, shipshape and *Emma*-fashion.

She grew up. When she was at last confronted with the chaotic denouement of Harriet's infatuation with Knightley, "it darted through her with the speed of an arrow that Mr Knightley must marry no one but herself". A hurricane tore up the gently nodding trees of Highbury. Knightley was after all the purger of her sins and tutor of her maturity. He found her "faultless in spite of her faults". He adored her.

Jane Austen has always defied illustration. Dickens has his Phiz and Lewis Carroll his Tenniel. I have no picture in my mind's eye of any Austen character. Her books carry only portraits of herself. The nearest we have to a description of *Emma* is "handsome". The young men of Highbury are not beating a path to her door. Austen did not want *Emma* pretty. She was writing a geography of the emotions, a route map through the turbulence within. To give her characters flesh and blood would put this map at risk. To put them onto film would dazzle the reader with surface light and lose the shadows.

The central tension in *Emma* is between the heroine, sublimating her marital hopes in those of her



Gwyneth Paltrow as *Emma*, the heroine of Austen's maturity: "faultless in spite of her faults"

friends, and Knightley's horror at her meddling. These two individuals are 18 years apart, divided not just by age but by a generation of wisdom and moral behaviour. She is wealthy, pert, witty and immature. He is sensible rather than intellectual, constant rather than doting, not rich but "with land". *Emma* is often described as a marriage of converging maturities.

The film version is gorgeous and enjoyable. Gwyneth Paltrow's *Emma* is doe-eyed and full of artless menace. Her astonishing neck—Paltrow must have giraffes as ancestors—would have had all Highbury gasping. Her complexion is more Malibu than Surrey. For an American, her mastery of English accent and inflection is extraordinary. In the other roles, the producer's wily turn to the English stage and won Sophie Thompson as Miss Bates and Juliet Stevenson as Mrs Elton. Both deserve cameo Oscars. The men are less right—Mr Elton too plain,

Mr Churchill too old—but no matter. Austen's men are mere swallows, swooping low over the hearts of girls and teasing them back to their nests.

As Knightley, Jeremy Northam is a dashing Prince Charming from

**Simon Jenkins**

the start. When he and *Emma* first gaze at each other in the firelight, electricity and wedding bells are already in the air. Despite his cold reprimand of *Emma* for her rudeness to Miss Bates on Box Hill, these are two lovers circling each other, waiting to clinch. When Knightley at last kisses her, it is a kiss of passion, not of atonement or

forgiveness. *Emma* is Hollywood's answer to *Four Weddings and a Funeral*: four weddings and a stately home. It offers a younger Jane Austen's sense of redeeming sensibility, of the Age of Reason marking out the boundaries for the Age of Romance. *Emma* is a book of a different story with a darker theme. It is that of age auditing youth. Forgiveness, and eventually love, comes only after a fearful scolding. Knightley begins as *Emma*'s uncle—"the only one who tells me my faults"—becomes her mentor, and only ends as her husband. Even then she cannot bring herself to call him by his first name. This is the tale of the "older man". It was the work of Austen's own maturity, completed in 1816 shortly before her fatal illness. She made Knightley the same age as herself. I cannot tell you how this Knightley appears nowhere in the film.

But so what? The role of the nit-picker in these period adaptions should be limited. Those such as

*Middlemarch* and *Pride and Prejudice* were long enough to attempt some truth to the original. Where they diverged was irritating, to those who respect the original even maddening. There is nothing in George Eliot's novel to suggest that it was Casaubon who was sexually frigid—only the BBC's yearning for a bed scene. In *Pride and Prejudice*, the character of Mrs Bennet so embodies the title that we must feel some sympathy for her predicament. By making her a clown, the BBC tore the heart from the drama and replaced it with *Punch and Judy*.

A feature film is different. It has just 90 minutes to strut the stage. Adaptation of a novel can only be "free". I preferred *Sense and Sensibility*, a film, to *Pride and Prejudice* on television, largely because it made little pretence to dramatise a book. It was a film, a glorious swirl of girls pining and men trifling. Buildings and landscape were used as Austen never used them, but to brilliant effect. Austen's contrast of sense (Elton) and sensibility (Marianne) was easy to deconstruct and recreate in celluloid.

The film of *Emma* is a version of the novel in the same sense as the recent Hollywood comedy *Clueless*, which set *Emma* in modern dress. But what it lost in subtlety it gained in sumptuousness. *Emma* is a beautifully acted and photographed love story. I am sure Jane Austen would have wincing at the casting, but she would have happily settled in her parlour at Chawton to count the royalties.

Nothing vindicates these revivals so much as the path they beat back to their originals. The critics sneer that modern youth has to take its literature in visual form. This is simply untrue. By next month *Emma* will be the most read novel in England. I find this exhilarating. Jane Austen's creed was timeless. She held that the actions which matter most in life are those that govern personal relationships. Such actions may be conditioned by place, birth and money—as they still are—but this is mere backdrop.

In the beginning was the heart and it remains to the end. In *Northanger Abbey*, she wrote that a novelist must convey "the most thorough knowledge of human nature and the happiest delineation of its varieties". She achieved this within the confines of four families locked in an English village. Genius needs no wider canvas.

The cinema's rediscovery of Austen testifies to the power of her creed. We should shout it from the aisles and across the popcorn. Hiding behind the frocks and the frolics, the tantrums and the tears is a good book waiting to be read. It is worth a thousand movies.



Classroom politics: Jemima

The unassuming joint on Shaftesbury Avenue will fold its final napkin in November. Albert Finney and Tom Courtenay are among regulars organising a petition to Camden council, which granted planning permission.

"We are very unpretentious," says Rick Valori, whose parents started doing out cheap lasagne in 1948. "But everyone seems to have been in over the years. Audrey Hepburn when she was a chorus girl—and John Gielgud used to come in with Ralph Richardson. I feel gutted."

**Teeny Tory**

WILLIAM HAGUE's record as the youngest delegate to speak at a Conservative Party conference may soon be overtaken. The Welsh Secretary was 16 when he impressed Margaret Thatcher with his speech. Last year his effort was nearly beaten by 14-year-old Justin Hinchliffe, but he was barred at the last minute because of his frighteningly right-wing views.

Now a St Trinian's-type schoolgirl of extraordinary precocity, 14-year-old Jemima Nichols, has pitched a bid for Bournemouth this year.

Backed by Tewkesbury Young

**Hello again**

THERE is no let-up in the row between the Marquesa de Valera, erstwhile social fixer of the gushing glossy *Hello!*, and its sharp-suited Editor Maggie Koumi.

The Marquesa, who is leaving the magazine, has received a letter from the lawyer Peter Carter-Ruck.

**Stateside Sue**

AFTER losing her job a fortnight ago as Editor of the *Sunday Express*, the leggy Sue Douglas is being tipped for a senior editorial post across the Atlantic. She is going to the Big Apple to see Mort Zuckerman, the property developer turned newspaper baron, who owns the *New York Daily News*.

"I'm going over there to see some



Backed by Tewkesbury Young

P.H.S



## LET'S GO FLY A KITE

Labour is in danger of spinning out of control

There is a technique of political presentation, as commonly used as it is cynical, known as "kite-flying". It involves leaking a policy proposal, assessing the public response and then, if necessary, either denying that the policy was ever under consideration or moderating it to suit the reaction. The Labour Party has become particularly enamoured of this method, and it is endangering the very reputation for straight-talking which Tony Blair has won for himself.

Mr Blair's backroom spin doctors have long been in danger of disappearing up their own vortex. Now his front benchers are joining in. Stephen Byers, Labour's Employment Shadow, had dinner on Wednesday with four journalists, among them our chief political correspondent, Jill Sherman. Each of them reported yesterday that Labour was considering balloting its members on cutting the party's links with the trade unions if the unions provoked a "summer of discontent" under a new Labour government. But by yesterday morning, the story was being hotly denied by Mr Byers, who said the reports were "prime candidates for the Booker Prize for Fiction".

This newspaper is in the business of fact, not fiction. Our reporters do not make up stories; they use their experience and expertise to extract the truth from what can often be a complicated web of deceit or distortion designed to portray the informant in a good light. In this case, we stand by our story and leave readers to judge whether they believe Mr Byers's version or ours.

For he has a special interest in behaving as he did. All week, Labour spokesmen have been addressing two audiences: one inside and the other outside the Blackpool Winter Gardens. To the wider world, they have been polishing their modern, even right-wing, credentials. Back in the TUC con-

ference, they have been toning down their statements, trying to reassure the old guard that the "wilder" press accounts are not to be believed.

To an extent these tactics have succeeded. Labour has given notice this week that in government, it would deal with the TUC little more favourably than any other interest group, such as the CBI. Mr Blair no longer treats his party as the political arm of the trade union movement. He knows that if he governed in a sectional rather than national interest, he would be thrown out of office at the earliest opportunity. This week his spokesmen were trying to prepare the unions for a 1990s Labour government which, if Mr Blair and his colleagues held their nerve, would be quite different from what the unions enjoyed in the 1970s.

This goes down well with the voters. But it angers many trade unionists. With each general election defeat and subsequent period of Conservative office, there is more back pay to be reclaimed, there are more laws to be repealed. If Labour were to win, some of them still think it would be a Second Coming. This is the illusion that Mr Blair needs to dispel. There is sense in him bringing trades unionists back to earth before an election rather than after.

His message has dangers too, though. There are voters on the old Left who may become so disillusioned that they will simply not bother to vote come polling day. Too much realism now may put them off. This is the price Mr Blair pays for honesty. But there is a price to pay for dishonesty too. The more that Labour muddles its message and plays to two different audiences, the less trustworthy it appears. Mr Blair, unlike many of his predecessors, seems frank and honest. He should do all in his power to protect that reputation. Once lost, it is near impossible to regain.

## LIFE IN VENICE

A fight against winds, waves, pollution and neglect

Of the multiple perils that Venice has faced in its long history, fatalism about this most precarious as well as most beautiful of cities has been the greatest. The assumption that Venice was irreparably headed into physical decay and pauperisation has been current at least since Byron lamented its "fall" in 1818: by the mid-19th century, Dickens took for granted his pleasure in Venice as a "ghostly city". Thirty years ago, when Venice suffered the most catastrophic floods in its history, the obituaries appeared only mildly premature. The city was literally sinking into the lagoon in which, by miracles of early engineering skills, it had been set.

Venice is sinking no more, thanks to an international rescue effort which has stabilised the water table and restored much of its physical fabric to better condition than it has been in since the Republic fell to Napoleon in 1797. Considerable credit for converting the shock of the 1966 disaster into a lasting programme of practical restoration work lies with a Venetian resident and former British Ambassador to Italy, the late Sir Ashley Clarke. On Monday Venice in Peril, the charity he founded, will mark its 25th anniversary with an exhibition at the Italian Trade Centre in Piccadilly. It is well-designed, informative and modest — as is the organisation whose work it celebrates.

Its comprehensive restoration of the Madonna dell'Orto, Tintoretto's lovely Gothic parish church, was the first large-scale project undertaken in Venice after the 1966 flood and has been the model for other restorers. Among its 19 projects are such familiar tourist landmarks as the principal entrance to the Doge's Palace. But Venice in Peril's influence has been based not just on the painstaking, necessarily piecemeal work

of cleaning stones, statues and paintings. In a city whose prewar population of 170,000 has shrunk to 70,000, it has had the vitality of Venetian neighbourhoods constantly in mind. In the debate on how best the conservation of Venice's artistic inheritance can be combined with ways to revive the city's faltering economic pulse, it has played a role far beyond its financial contribution.

Tourism, Venice's economic mainstay, is also its bane; at high season, the place almost chokes with day-trippers who add little to its income while straining an urban fabric exceptionally unsuited to mass traffic. The energy that is going into rebuilding La Fenice, its exquisite opera house gutted by fire last January, reflects not just emotion but the vital importance of sustaining Venice's reputation as a cultural centre.

Beyond that, there are no easy answers — Venice is fortunate to have escaped one grand solution dreamt up a century ago, which proposed wholesale clearances and redevelopment, including the creation of wide boulevards so that motor cars could bring to Venice the prosperity of modern life. Yet the information age would seem to be made for a city that owes so much of its historical prosperity to the "service industries" of its banks and entrepot trade. Politically, it is now better managed than in the years when the Christian Democrats and Socialists carved up the spoils of local government; the new urban plan places proper emphasis on affordable housing for white-collar workers. Twenty-five years ago, the question was whether Venice could physically be saved; the fact that today's debate is about how to make it prosper is a tribute to a remarkable, even if far from complete, rescue operation.

## BEAM ME UP, SCOTTY

Will people wear their brains on their sleeves?

Those who feel that they cannot keep up with their neighbours in Mensa or worry that their brain cells have lost a volt or two can now put their names down for a transplant that boffins promise will soon be on the way. Within a few years, visionaries told the British Association for the Advancement of Science this week, surgeons will be able to implant a tiny microchip at the back of the human brain. This will do everything from restoring people's sight to allowing troops in a war zone to communicate with base by beaming up the military map to the squaddies' brain chips and bringing them home on autopilot.

The possibilities are endless. Chips could be designed to make your chess game unbeatable, or transmit the secrets of French cuisine through your visual cortex so that a gourmet feast flashes upon the inward eye whenever you are stuck for what to give the guests for dinner. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is already working on the development of special shoes to store static electricity from the carpet to power the chips; other researchers must surely be investigating how the phrase "photographic memory" can make even the most fiendish examinations mere child's play.

Even before the scalpels are out to create bionic man, the slip-on version will soon be in all the shops. The portable computer is now available, cunningly disguised as a watch or musical T-shirt. With most of Britain already covered by mobile phone

demanding their own numbers as soon as they can talk, and a lifelong hook-up to cyberspace will be included in recommended books on parenting. Already, smart computers can recognise voices, and at the wink of a familiar eye can open the garage door or turn on the oven. Indeed, if research into the harnessing of electrical brainwaves to power chairs for the handicapped can be extended, it will not be long before you need only look with a concentrated air at your wrist-computer to have your household chores accomplished in a trice.

There are drawbacks to this brave new world. No computer is infallible or proof against human boisterousness. What if a grain of sand, trapped in the works during a frolic on the beach, dispatched that incomplete letter of resignation to your boss? Or will a rather too vigorous embrace in the back row of the cinema burn the dinner and the bath overflowing?

Not everyone, of course, will want to programme their lives with off-the-peg software. A few rebels — an artist, perhaps, or an aspiring poet — may pluck the cell from their brains, or at least smash the brain on their wrists and trust, foolishly, to human intuition. Others may favour the pre-cyber look, and keep a computerised gold time-piece on a waistcoat chain which flashes its commands with a purringly old-fashioned tic. Hardware shops will mean something very different to future generations; and youngsters will look back on Star Trek and egle at its naivety.

## Doing business with new Labour?

From Viscount Caldecote, FEng

Sir, There is much good sense in the article by Lord Hanson ("Why I can't do business with Blair", September 10; letters, September 12), the sub-heading of which says that "the boardroom has much to fear from new Labour". But if those fears are to be liars there is much that we Conservatives have to do in promoting the Prime Minister's admirable objective of creating a nation at ease with itself.

Excesses in the boardroom need to be curbed. These include absurdly inflated pay with the addition of easily-achieved "incentive" schemes, excessive share option schemes with no downside risk, and vast "compensation" payments for those who fail in their job.

Complaints of such abuses are usually countered by claims that such decisions are ultimately the responsibility of the shareholders, when the board's remuneration committee falls down on its job. That is true, but how often do institutional shareholders (the effective owners of most large pics) carry out these responsibilities? Clearly far too seldom: but when occasionally they do, they can be most effective.

The existing regime of "self-regulation" by shareholders is not working well enough, and there is a need for legislation. For instance, it should only be permissible for share options to be granted pro rata to shareholding: incentive schemes should apply to all employees, not just to a privileged few, as is already the case in profit-sharing schemes.

Loyalty and unity of purpose are priceless assets in any organisation. They are not encouraged by such excesses and perceived unfairness, which do no good to the Conservative cause either.

Yours faithfully,  
CALDECOTE,  
House of Lords.  
September 12

From the President of the Board of Trade

Sir, Lord Hanson is right to highlight the dangers to the economy of a Labour government. This Government has promoted sustained economic growth by working with the market rather than trying to regulate it.

Whilst some regulation is, of course, needed, the Government's attitude is always to question why, and to interfere in the market only when absolutely necessary. Competition policy is a good example: our emphasis on encouraging vigorous and fair competition recognises the contribution it can make to the competitiveness of British business and to securing value for money for customers.

Similarly, the Government's output from the social chapter will free British business from the burdens imposed by the regime of regulation and compulsion on our EU competitors. Little wonder, therefore, that we continue to attract almost 40 per cent of Japanese and US investment into the EU: that we have more of our population of working age in employment than any other major EU country and that our unemployment rate is far below the EU average.

These benefits have come from policies designed to create an environment which encourages enterprise and competition. British business will not thank a government that puts those achievements in danger.

Yours sincerely,  
IAN LANG,  
Department of Trade and Industry,  
Ashdown House,  
Victoria Street, SW1.  
September 12

From Professor Emeritus  
Nicholas Kurti, FRS

Sir, Lord Hanson writes, "While posing as a friend of small businesses, Labour plans to impose on them the social chapter..."

May I quote from the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht 1992), which contains the social chapter, that Article 2, paragraph 2 of the Agreement on Social Policy clearly states that "... directives shall avoid imposing administrative, financial and legal constraints in a way which would hold back the creation and development of small and medium-sized undertakings."

The publishers who reissued the treaty a few months after it first appeared seem to have chosen, tongue in cheek, an appropriate title — *The Unseen Treaty* — because it appeared to be a matter of your signature to your employer.

Yours faithfully,  
N. KURTI,  
University of Oxford,  
Department of Physics,  
Clarendon Laboratory,  
Park Road, Oxford.  
September 12

From Mr L. Cooley

Sir, I feel sure that most of Lord Hanson's very disappointed shareholders will welcome Tony Blair as their next Prime Minister.

Yours faithfully,  
L. COOLEY,  
Fairmead, Surbiton, Surrey.  
September 10

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Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### "Taller, bigger, glossier" buildings on London's skyline

From Professor Maxwell Hutchinson

Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG 15, Sections 2.11-2.17).

Sir, Height alone is not the critical issue in the evaluation of a building. The question is whether or not it is truly good architecture.

The tower at Canary Wharf is a dull update of the heavyweight Manhattan construction of the 1930s. The Grade II listed Centre Point makes its mark through surface texture and form. The NatWest Tower is a worthy landmark, with its plan shape born out of the company's logo and its fractured skyline.

Sir Norman Foster's proposed Millennium Tower, to be erected in the City on the site of the bomb-damaged Baltic Exchange (report and photograph, September 10), seems imbued with the same architectural quality and originality as his justly famous Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank in Hong Kong.

It may not be ready for the millennium but it is by far a worthier monument than an ephemeral item of fairground machinery.

Kind regards,  
MAXWELL HUTCHINSON  
(President, Royal Institute of British Architects, 1989-91),  
Connal House,  
80 Wimpole Street, W1.  
September 11.

From Mr G. Roland Adamson

Sir, It shouldn't be too difficult for Mr Peter Rees, the City of London's planning officer, to recommend refusal of permission for Sir Norman Foster's "crowning glory" for London skyline, as your headline (September 10) puts it. All he has to do is rigorously apply the worthy principles of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 and the ministerial guidance set out in

Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG 15, Sections 2.11-2.17).

Sir Norman's tower, and the proposed dreadful South Bank Ferris wheel (report, April 18; letters, April 24, May 27, June 4, 14, 19), must between them affect more than few important listed buildings and national monuments — and should be refused on that ground alone.

Yours etc.  
G. ROLAND ADAMSON  
(Town planning and development consultant),  
Ivy Cottage, Charing Hill,  
Charing, Ashford, Kent.

From Mr Christopher K. Makin

Sir, If Sir Norman Foster's proposed tower is to be challenged on the ground of scale, what might have been the fate of Sir Christopher Wren's St Paul's Cathedral in a 17th-century context?

Yours faithfully,  
CHRISTOPHER MAKIN,  
25 Hampstead Lane, N7.

From Mr Andrew Tobin

Sir, Taller, bigger and glossier buildings may be appropriate for those rapidly developing cities of the Far East which are desperately trying to surpass their neighbours, or North America, where skyscrapers are a well established architectural genre. London, however, is an ancient and manure city with a well established sense of identity and should have no need to enter into this competition as it represents an end in itself.

Yours faithfully,  
ANDREW TOBIN,  
Flat D, 13 Queen Square, WC1.  
September 10.

From Mr L. B. Kapp

Sir, The number of daytime occupants of the new building proposed for the Baltic Exchange site must run into thousands.

Surely the body which should be most closely involved in discussions is the transport planning department of the City of London, if there is such a thing. At the moment it does not seem as if there is.

Yours sincerely,  
L. B. KAPP,  
109 Drapers' Close,  
Dibden, Southampton.  
September 10.

From Mr Michael Saxby

Sir, Building glass gives the terrorist his sharpen. I cannot understand how Sir Norman Foster can so disregard the lessons from the injuries and material damage caused by the explosion outside the Baltic Exchange.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL SAXBY,  
Southlands,  
Stowmarket Road, Woolpit,  
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.  
September 10.

From Mr Andrew Bradford

Sir, Now that whole ice shelves in Antarctica are disappearing as global warming takes hold, perhaps Sir Norman should incorporate into his design provision in the ground floor for the docking of gondolas and water buses.

Yours faithfully,  
ANDREW BRADFORD,  
Kincardine,  
Kincardine O'Neil,  
Aboyne, Aberdeenshire.  
September 10.

From Mr Peter Newell

Sir,

As

freeloader of the Lyceum Theatre we greatly welcome the redevelopment now being carried out by Apollo Leisure (report, September 7). This will return one of London's finest theatres to its original use 38 years after it was purchased for demolition by the old London County Council. Your description of it as a "Regency theatre" may confuse, however.

If the exception of "reasonable chastisement" were removed, so that children had the same protection under the law on assault as adults, there would be no question of trivial assaults of children getting to court, which would amount to actual or grievous bodily harm if aimed at an adult. The repeated caning of the boy causing weals is not disputed.

Such arguments confuse rather than clarify the issue. This boy's application is not about smacking. It is about the failure of current English law to protect children from treatment which would amount to actual or grievous bodily harm if aimed at an adult. The repeated caning of the boy causing weals is not disputed.

Yours faithfully,

PETER NEWELL (Co-ordinator),

Epoch (End Physical Punishment of Children),

77 Holloway Road, N7.

September 12.

From Dr Anne-Carole Chamier

Sir,

As

chamier

1 am, Sir, your obedient servant,

CAROLE CHAMIER,



## COURT CIRCULAR

### BUCKINGHAM PALACE

September 13: The Duke of York, Colonel-in-Chief, The Royal Irish Regiment, this afternoon received Lieutenant Colonel Robert Andrew upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer 3rd Battalion and Lieutenant Colonel Michael Clements upon assuming the appointments.

September 13: The Prince Edward, Patron, the Scottish Badminton Union, this afternoon attended the Friends Provident Grand Slam Tournament at the Bell's Sports Centre, Perth, and was received by Mr John Matheson (Deputy Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross).

ST JAMES'S PALACE

September 13: The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning visited the Shaftesbury Housing

Group development in Mere, and farms in the Eastern District.

His Royal Highness, Patron, Abbeyfield, this afternoon met residents at the Abbeyfield House, Dorchester, and was received by Major General Mark Bond (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset).

The Prince of Wales later visited the Joseph Wels Hospice, Dorchester.

### YORK HOUSE

September 13: The Duke of Kent, Patron, this afternoon visited the Stoke Mandeville Burns and Reconstructive Surgery Research Trust, Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, and was met on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Berkshire, Commander the Lord Cottesloe.

### Weekend royal engagements

THE DUKE OF KENT, as Honorary Air Commodore, will attend the At Home day of RAF Leuchars at 11.00.

TOMORROW: The Duke of Edinburgh, as patron, will open the refurbished headquarters of the Braemar Mountain Rescue Association, Glenshee Road, Braemar, Aberdeenshire, at 3.00.

The Prince of Wales will attend the annual Battle of Britain service of thanksgiving and rededication in Westminster Abbey at 11.00.

### Service dinners

**Royal Navy Medical Club**  
The Royal Navy Medical Club held a dinner last night at the Royal Naval College Greenwich. Surgeon-Admiral A. Craig presided.

Among those present were: Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, Air Marshal P.T. Squire, Vice-Admiral Sir Jonathan Tod, Dr A.W. Macara and Sir Rodney Swannell.

**King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry**  
Brigadier R. St C. Preston presided at the annual dinner of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry Regimental Officers' Club held last night at the Royal York Hotel, York.

**XX The Lancashire Fusiliers**  
XX The Lancashire Fusiliers held their Minden Club dinner last night at the Army and Navy Club, Colonel I.R. Carwright presided.

**RAF Strike Command**  
A ladies' guest night dinner was held last night at Headquarters Strike Command, RAF High Wycombe. Air Commodore M.D. Packer, Air Officer Plans and Mr J.P. Thackeray, Command Secretary, received the guests. Group Captain J.A. Cline presided.

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### Old Millhillians Club

On Friday, September 27, 1996, the Club are pleased to be hosting the Midlands Dinner at The Northampton and County Club, George Road, Northampton. Principal guest speakers will be the Headmaster and the President of the Club, Old Millhillians wishing to attend should contact John Perkins, The Shropshire, Castle Hill, Great Billing, Northampton, NN6 0AA, for more information.

### Church news

The Rev John Loxton, Vicar, Turners Hill (Chichester); to retire September 30.

### Dinners

**English-Speaking Union**  
Sir Ernest Hall was the guest of honour and speaker at a dinner of the English-Speaking Union held last night at the Majestic Hotel, Harrogate, to mark the closing of the ESU World Members' Conference. Baroness Brigstocke, chairman of the union, presided. Mr John Salmon also spoke. Lady Brigstocke received the guests with Mr Alan Cox, deputy chairman, and Mrs Valerie Mitchell, director-general.

**The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland**  
The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland held its Annual Dinner on Friday, September 13, at the Royal Bath Hotel, Bournemouth, after the Annual Scientific Meeting, held jointly with the Society of Anaesthesiologists and Intensive Care Medicine.

Among those present were: Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, Air

Marshal P.T. Squire, Vice-Admiral Sir Jonathan Tod, Dr A.W. Macara and Sir Rodney Swannell.

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## OBITUARIES

## JAMES GULLIVER

James Gulliver, CVO, former chairman of the Argyll Group, died of a heart attack on September 12 aged 66. He was born on August 17, 1930.

**W**hen, in December 1985, James Gulliver launched his bid for the drinks giant Distillers, the name of his company, Argyll Group, was hardly known outside the City. Yet, even in a year of audacious corporate cannibalism such as 1985 was, the Argyll Group's £1.9 billion offer was spectacularly breathtaking. Certainly it put in the shade Guinness's bid, made during the summer, of £300 million, for the whisky firm Arthur Bell, of 'Afore Ye Go' fame.

For James Gulliver it was a long, long way from his father's grocery shop in Campbeltown, Argyllshire. Most of his career had been spent in retailing. He had, notably, revitalised the Fine Fare supermarket chain in the 1970s and had been named Young Businessman of the Year in 1972 before striking out on his own with Argyll.

Indeed, it was a desire to return to his roots and prove himself on his home ground that led Gulliver to bid for Distillers. The company, though one of Scotland's most famous, was then in decline, with its home market share in whisky down to 15 per cent from 75 per cent in the 1960s.

Yet Distillers, notwithstanding that its ailing federal system was outdated and many of its brand names were fighting against each other, was still rich in assets. Among other things it was owner of that (perhaps most famous of all Scotch whiskies), Johnnie Walker, and of the brand name synonymous with gin — Gordon's. Had Gulliver pulled the deal off it would have established him as the most powerful of Scotland's business sons and crowned his career with the kind of success for which he had always hungered.

But it was not to be. Guinness, in the person of Ernest Saunders, now entered the fray. In spite of Saunders's earlier assurances to Gulliver that the wear and tear of the Bell

takeover had been so great that no such bid would be considered, he entered into highly secret negotiations with the board of Distillers. Somewhat alarmed by Gulliver's radical restructuring plans for Distillers, its directors — always a fundamentally conservative bunch at heart — were much more amenable to the Guinness approach. When Guinness found out what was going on and counter-acted with a higher price, £2.3 billion, Saunders himself riposted, with a complex series of share support operations which appeared to sustain the value of the Guinness bid, and at the same time to carry assurances that Distillers need not fear restructuring of the kind it apprehended from Gulliver.

In what was to begin as the most acrimonious of takeovers and became the biggest business scandal of the 1980s, Sullivan lost his bid to Guinness, which then abandoned all the promises on restructuring it had made to its new acquisition. But the roughest takeover the City had seen in years turned into a notorious fraud case when four businessmen stood trial for the manipulation of the Guinness share price which had enabled it to triumph over Argyll. In August 1990 Ernest Saunders received a jail sentence for his part in the illegal share support operation.

Sullivan always felt bitter over being, as he saw it, cheated out of a takeover which would have been good for Scotland and was a master of personal pride. If it is an exaggeration to say it broke his spirit, then he never quite recovered from it. Apart from anything else the cost of his failed bid eventually came to more than £34 million. There were to be further advances for Argyll, such as the takeover of the British arm of the American-owned Safeway chain in 1987. But the acquisition on which Sullivan had set his heart, as the crowning achievement of his business career, was denied to him.

James Gerald Gulliver was born in Argyll and educated at the Campbelltown Grammar School and the University of Glasgow. He later had a period of study in America at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Between 1956 and 1959 he served in



the Royal Navy on a short service commission before embarking on a career in management consultancy with Urwick, Orr & Partners in 1961. But telling other people how to run their companies when he had never run one himself was not really to his taste. It was his move to Fine Fare in 1965 which gave him the opportunity to show what he was made of. At that time the supermarket chain was making substantial losses.

Gulliver started in a modest enough way on the shoplifting side.

But what he achieved there in a very short time saw his translation to managing director of the whole Fine Fare operation within a matter of months. He revitalised the chain from top to bottom and by the 1970s it had gone into a handsome profit, earning for Sullivan, who was its chairman from 1967 to 1972, a businessman of the year award.

This was a triumph of major proportions, but working for others was not his metier. He left Fine Fare intending to set up in the food and

drinks business on his own, taking it as a sort of backhanded compliment that the company managed legally to prevent him from setting up in opposition. He next bought a stake in Oriel, a food distribution business. He built it up substantially and when it was bought out in 1974 by the American entertainments company RCA he made his first million.

After a few more operations — very much caretaker stuff by his standards — he took a stake in Louis C. Edwards, an ailing Manchester butcher firm. This became the launching pad for a business career which — most satisfyingly — included his taking over his old company Oriel. He also acquired Allied Suppliers to James Goldsmith. The subsequent acquisition of the Scottish grocery chains Galbraith and Templeton and a merger with Amalgamated Distilled Products saw him at the head of one of Britain's largest food and drinks groups. In 1977 James Gulliver Associates was born, soon to become the Argyll Group.

After the catastrophe of the Distillers affair and the losses it involved, Argyll naturally had to pause. When Sullivan decided to move ahead again, the acquisition of the 130 Safeway supermarkets in Britain put the firm into third place in the British supermarket league behind Tesco and Sainsbury. But with the business ethos becoming less buoyant as the 1980s drew to a close, a buyout of the carpet and furniture empire Lowndes Queensway in 1988 proved to be something of a disaster. Losses mounted, the company went into receivership and in 1990 Sullivan stepped down as chairman. He had already relinquished the chairmanship of the Argyll Group.

It was the end of his business career, but he continued to be active in a number of spheres. He was a vice-president of Manchester United FC and a vice-chairman of Hearts. In addition he was a trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, work for which he was appointed CVO in this year's Birthday Honours.

He was four times married and is survived by his fourth wife Melanie, and by the three sons and two daughters of his first marriage.

## JOANNE DRU

Joanne Dru, screen actress, died on September 10 aged 73. She was born on January 31, 1923.

JOANNE DRU was a stunning American actress of the 1940s and 1950s, who played the colouring of Vivien Leigh with the screen magnetism of Ava Gardner. She made about 40 films, many of them westerns, including *Red River*, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* and *Wagonmaster*. Had she not been so irreverent towards Hollywood, she could certainly have gone further. As it was, she worked hard only when she needed to, and two of her four husbands, the singer Dick Haymes and a businessman, C. V. Wood, were fabulously wealthy men.

Joanne LaCock, as she was christened, was born in Logan, West Virginia. Her father, a pharmacist, died when she was 14 and she and her mother and brother Peter settled in New York. Joanne and Peter changed their surname to Marshall (Peter became a celebrated game show host). Joanne, at 14, became a photographic model. At 15 she was dancing in shows and at 18 she was married to a young singer, Dick Haymes.

She stayed with Haymes for seven turbulent years, during which time she had three children and watched him become a big star. But the swiftness of his success unsettled him and he began to drink heavily. He and Joanne were divorced in 1949, by which time she was married to her fourth and last husband, C. V. Wood, the president of an oil company. They remained together happily for 26 years until his death. Dru no longer needed to work, and devoted her life to entertaining friends and to travelling.

Her acting career had slipped into second gear but she did not bemoan the fact. In 1949 she had married the actor John Ireland, whom she met on the set of *Red River*. After that and another brief marriage had ended in divorce, she married her fourth and last husband, C. V. Wood, the president of an oil company. They remained together happily for 26 years until his death. Dru no longer needed to work, and devoted her life to entertaining friends and to travelling.

Her husband owned land in Arizona and it was his lasting distinction to be remembered as the man who brought the present London Bridge's rather unremarkable predecessor to the American desert. He initially believed himself to be buying Tower Bridge and to be saving it from decay and demolition. Indeed at one point he accidentally described his intended purchase as "the leaning Tower of Pisa". But his mistake, once discovered, did not bother the good-natured "Woody", who proudly erected the landmark on American soil, even though he had to divert a river to do so.

He died four years ago. A daughter, Barbara Nugent (named after John Ford's daughter), also predeceased Joanne Dru. She is survived by her other daughter and by a son from her first marriage.

## DAVID DONALDSON

David Donaldson, the Queen's Painter and Limner in Scotland, died on August 22 aged 80. He was born on June 28, 1916.

TO BE painted by David Donaldson — and many of the great and the good sat for him down the years — was to experience not just the close attention of an artist rooted in the Scottish colourist tradition, but the congenial company of a great wit and raconteur. Donaldson's sense of humour was pure Glasgow, his language as colourful as his canvases, and his stock of anecdotes, many told against himself, apparently limitless.

His students at the Glasgow School of Art where he first learned, then taught for more than 50 years, adored him because he never spoke down to them, instead sitting beside them and talking them through their work, sometimes using his own brush to explain a point.

A volatile man, his temper could be awesome, but he was rarely angry for long, and he would make amends with the offer of a bacon roll or a glass of white wine.

As an artist, he may be remembered more for his still lifes, which reflected what he called "the immaculate grammar and beauty of paint", than for his portraits, which were of uneven quality. His exuberance did not always sit

easily with the gravity required for official studies of such subjects as the Queen or Margaret Thatcher. But his self-portraits — naked, with strategically placed flower, or nattily dressed with fish supper — reflected a natural irreverence.

Later on they became darker and more introspective, and his *Self-Portrait in Winter*, painted in 1978, may well rank as his best. He had no time for the abstract and was impatient of students who rejected the discipline of draughtsmanship. "In Glasgow drawing was holy writ," he told his biographer, W. Gordon Smith, in 1995. "There was no talk of aesthetics, none of the semi-amateur psychiatry which modern art schools have doused themselves with. It was an engineering process and it stayed with me all the time I was in the school of art and still does."

David Abercrombie Donaldson was born in poverty, and brought up in extraordinary circumstances — "a wee bastard who was born up a close in Coatbridge" as he described himself. Fostered out by his unmarried parents, he was brought back to his grandparents' council house at the age of four. There he grew up under the same roof as his natural father, but without being told who he was — David imagined he was a big brother.

Later, even more bizarrely, his natural mother was employed there as a housemaid, again without David knowing who she was. And, in a final irony, he was dressed up in a kilt at the age of eleven to attend their wedding, though it was not until he had reached his teens that he was informed that they were his parents. Given such a disturbed childhood, it is remarkable that Donaldson became a life-enhancing figure.

At school he was encouraged by a teacher and a local Baptist minister to apply for entry to the Glasgow School of Art, and, despite a complete lack of qualifications, he was admitted at the age of 15. He described it as "a flight from reality", and for the first few years he just "hung around" — though he enjoyed the life-classes. Then he was taken up by the school's director, William (later Sir William) Hutchison who recognised his artistic ability and encouraged him to express himself directly through paint. He also helped him socially and financially.

Hugh Crawford, acknowledged as one of the greatest of Glasgow's art teachers, also became his mentor, and Ian Fleming, who thought he was the outstanding student of his generation, taught him etching. In 1937 Hutchison awarded Donaldson the Haldane travelling scholarship, a coveted prize which allowed him to go to Paris and Florence. "The book was opened for me at just the right place," he was to say later. "It would be triumphant to say that it was crucial."

Soon after his return Hutchison offered Donaldson five shillings an hour to teach in the night school. In 1940 he joined the staff of the GSA, and 27 years later was made head of the painting school, a post he held until 1981.

Declared unfit for war service, partly because of his height (he was barely five feet tall) he carried on teaching through the war years. In 1942 he married Kathleen Boyd Maxwell, and, when they were divorced, he met and fell in love with one of his students, Marysia (Maria) Mora-Szorc, whom he described as "a wee Polish girl with an incredibly attractive accent". They were married in 1948, and her elfin features became the subject of scores of his paintings over the next 40 years.

In 1977 he was appointed the Queen's Painter and Limner in Scotland, an honorary post rather like that of Poet Laureate, and he was given doctorates by both Strathclyde and Glasgow universities. Last June saw the publication of his biography, and, to mark his 80th birthday, a major retrospective exhibition at the Talbot Rice Gallery in Edinburgh. Both the book and the exhibition demonstrated the enthusiasm and energy of a genuine painter.

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He is survived by his wife, Marysia, by a son from his first marriage, and by two daughters from his second.

## ON THIS DAY

September 14, 1925

The TUC in its final session at Scarborough got the bit between its teeth, calling for the end of private ownership of land and threatening dire things for the British Empire.

Labour opinion of the Dominions would not endorse the views submitted in support of the resolution.

The intervention was without avail. It only served to provoke Mr. Harry Pollitt, the secretary of the Minority Movement, to attack Mr. Thomas and his Imperialism in the same way as, the day before, he had artfully made use of the opportunity provided by the discussion on the Davies Report to attack Mr. Ramsey MacDonald and his Labour Government — an example of the Communist analogy to the Socialism which adheres to the principle of democracy.

The result of the voting for the new General Council was announced but a question arose as to the accuracy of the figures and a recount was ordered. Most of the retiring members of the council who were opposed were re-elected. An exception to the rule was the defeat of Miss J. V. V. Scott, who had been elected in 1923. The uncontested elections returned Mr. J. H. Thomas, Mr. P. T. Richards, Mr. Richards takes the place of Mr. Herbert Smith as one of the miners' nominees. Mr. E. B. R. Smith shares with Mr. B. Tillet the representation of the transport workers other than railwaymen. On the whole the council is rather 'left' than its predecessor. All the retiring members who have manifested definitely Communist leanings have been returned, but, on the other hand, the anti-Communists have now better leadership. The pro-Communists have now



Donaldson's portrait of the Queen wearing the robes of the Order of the Thistle

## PERSONAL COLUMN

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## TICKETS FOR SALE

When responding to advertisements readers are advised to establish the facts very carefully before entering into any commitment. Most sports tickets are subject to certain rules.

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Mr. VICTOR S. MORTON, Tel. 0121 2212000.

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Are you healthy enough to drive on holiday?

Page 2

# CAR 36

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 1996

Wonderful racing round the streets of Denmark

Page 5



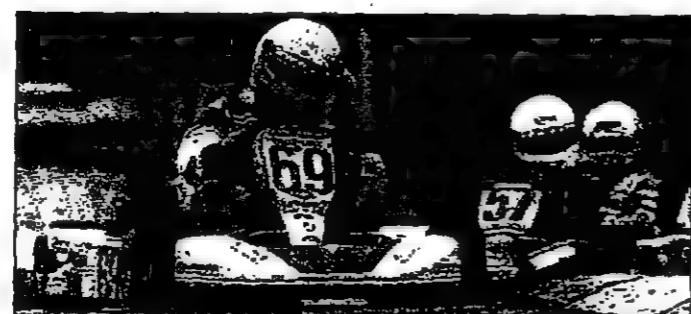
55



Edward Redfern prepares to race at Silverstone. The track's experts think Edward is so good, they have entered him in the senior Formula Ford category. He has his first taste of the full Formula in a 1.8-Zetec single seater next Sunday

He's a young star, but he can't drive, says Kevin Eason

## Boy racer's big test



His karting skill is in the classic grand prix drivers' tradition

**E**dward Redfern is Britain's fastest boy racer. Next week, the 17-year-old will line up on the grid at Brands Hatch, elevated into competition against seniors because of his outstanding prowess on the track.

Five days later, Edward — holder of a race driver's licence, several times a winner and lap record holder — will attempt to conquer the one test he has so far failed in his fledgling career: he will try to get his driving licence.

For Edward might be hot stuff on the circuit, but he failed when it mattered at the steering wheel of a humble Ford Escort diesel. His examiner decided that the boy who had roared through the chequered flag four times this season was "too hesitant" and refused him a licence to drive on the roads.

The irony is not lost on a young man, whose calm manner and good sense has turned him into a junior Damon Hill. "It's strange because I haven't been dumped at the start line all season. But I clearly wasn't decisive enough when I sat my test for the first time. Let's hope the second time goes a little better," he says.

Edward's racing progress is in the classic tradition of some of the world's top Formula One drivers, such as Michael Schumacher.

Johnny Herbert, Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard all started in go-karts. Edward was at the wheel aged ten, sharing a kart with a chum down the road in Fleet, Hampshire. The competition was fierce — including one outing when the grid included two young men called William and Harry... as in Windsor.

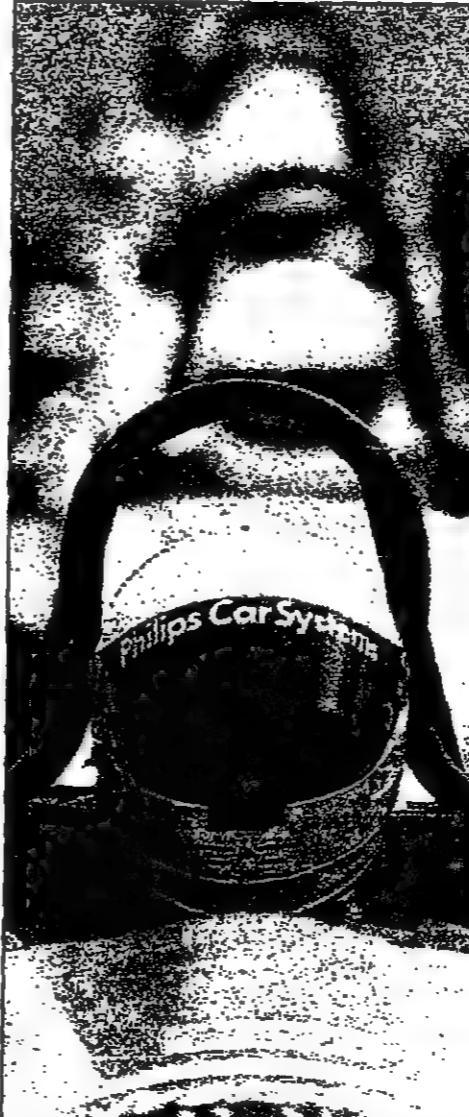
The princes were gifted karters, but Edward had already set his eyes on bigger things. As soon as he was 16, he coaxed his father, Derek, into a trip to the Silverstone Driving Centre, based at the famous Northamptonshire grand prix circuit, at the end of last season, to enter his in the senior Formula Ford category for next season. He gets his first sample of the full Formula in a more powerful 1.8-Zetec single seater at Brands, the Kent circuit, next Sunday.

Then, backed with sponsorship

worth about £30,000 from Philips Car Systems and a Silverstone car, Edward will battle for the Formula Ford title next year, the first step in what could become a career in racing. Derek says: "It costs around £75,000 to run a car for a season, the sort of money we haven't got. We are just an ordinary family and so far we have had the backing from the Silverstone Driving Centre and Philips which has made all the difference. But the test for Edward comes now because he is only at the very bottom of racing. He is a sensible lad and knows there is a long way to go yet."

In between Brands Hatch and next season lies that driving test. Edward is geared up and ready to go, the nerves more shredded than if he were in his helmet and racing overall ready to screech around a hairpin bend.

The technique is obviously different for racing and perhaps that was my problem last time," he says. "You can't really compare hitting the brakes at 130mph to get down to 40mph, at the same time heelng and toeing the clutch and brake pedal, with driving around town. You need discipline on the roads as much as on the track. I don't mind if I don't win next Sunday — but I really want to pass my driving test. Maybe I will have to work harder on that."



So close, but being rammed lost him a title

### FORD'S NEW BABY

## Ka: even the name is somewhat short

**F**ord has unveiled its new mini car — except that it's bigger than a Mini. The Ka, named after an Egyptian virility symbol, was announced this week as a revolutionary city car with a frugal engine and seats for four.

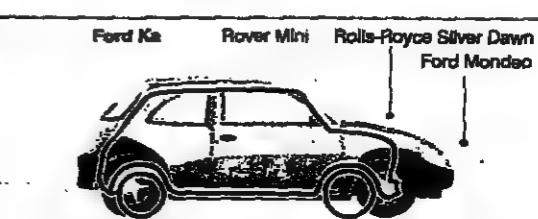
At 3,620 millimetres long, it is a tiddler against a Rolls-Royce, which is 5,268mm from Spirit of Ecstasy to rear bumper. Even Ford's own Mondeo mid-range model seems positively hefty by comparison, with a bumper-to-bumper length of 4,480mm.

But the Ka, based on a Fiesta platform, is much bigger than true mini cars, a category really established in Britain 37 years ago by the definitive Mini

when Sir Alec Issigonis packed an engine, boot and four people into a box just 10 feet (3.048m) long.

Ford says that this time, size really doesn't matter because the Ka is so pretty, it will turn more heads than any other small car on the roads. Its futuristic packaging, with snazzy angled lamps against a smooth bubbled body, is aimed at drivers who want a model distinctively different and could have a significant impact on Ford sales if it is a success.

Ford needs to carve out a new sales niche when the Ka arrives in showrooms next month, because the company's factory at Valencia in Spain is geared up to make as many as 200,000 cars a year.



Ka launch review, page 3

One reason why Darren Barnes of Durban chose Orange

Minimum monthly charge to make 15 minutes of national peak rate calls

£17.63 | £22.92 | £22.92

Vodafone PersonalWorld

Celnet Regular Caller Plus

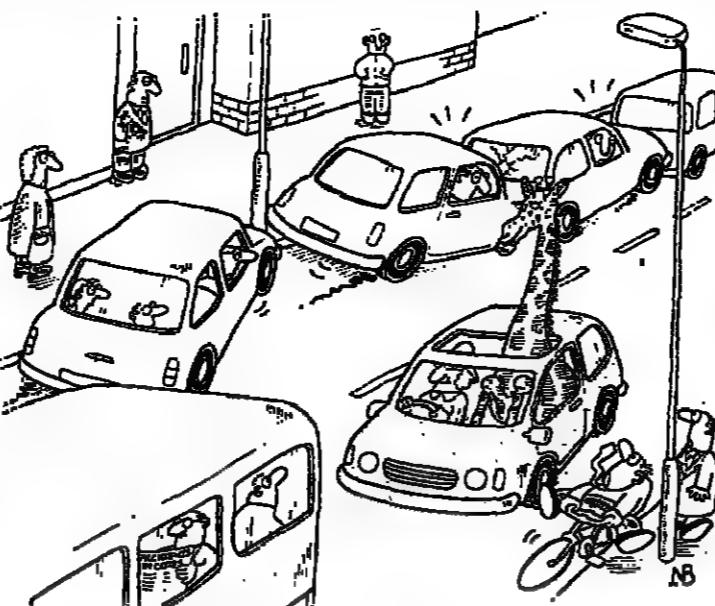
High city accident rates are due to rotten signposting which distracts ill-equipped drivers for vital moments

## Why lost giraffes would crash less

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard



insurance companies may not win any popularity contests, but they do produce some of the most interesting surveys around. The latest one, from Eagle Star, featured in *Car 96* last week, contained something of a mystery: why some cities seem to drive in others?

Part of the answer, in my opinion, is that giraffes do not drive cars and drivers do not have the facilities to drive a giraffe. While you think about it, here is a reminder of what Eagle Star discovered.

The company divided the number of policy holders in each of 19 cities by the number of accidents they reported to produce a percentage. Birmingham came off worst at 11 per cent, Southampton best at 7 per cent. I think the fact that Glasgow, Manchester and London fared among the five worst is a clue to why some cities are more dangerous than others.

Although Eagle Star finds "no straightforward reason" for some cities being more dangerous than others, I think a reasonable guess

can be made, based on the ordinary experience of driving around cities.

Most accidents happen within a few miles of home, which would suggest that being a stranger in a city is not the problem. But that conclusion could be wrong: the accidents in the survey may have involved local people, but this does not mean they were caused by locals.

I think that strangers to big cities cause accidents because they are constantly obliged to hunt around

Victorians, using dainty little oblongs of metal with dainty lettering. Some street signs are impossible to read at any distance. Either somebody has painted "Happy 50th George" on them or a postbox has been cleverly placed right in front of the sign. Most of the streets I search for seem to have three youths lolling against the street sign. They appear to have been given my itinerary and told to dog my route.

All of this means that a stranger in Birmingham or London or Glasgow is an accident looking for somewhere to happen. This is why many of the people driving in cities seem to be deformed. Their chins are on top of the steering wheel, their heads are at right angles to their necks and their eyes, which have a frantic appearance, are locked in the top of their eye sockets.

They are searching, upwards, for a clue, any clue, as to where they might be. Suddenly... bang! They have run into the car in front. The car in front is stationary. Its driver is nowhere to be seen. Ah yes, there he is, holding an A to Z in front of a pedestrian who turns out to be a Belgian tourist.

I know, strangers are a damned nuisance. But we are all strangers somewhere at some time, so can we have larger direction signs, better street signs, more district signs? Surely that would be easier than teaching giraffes to read.

## Your car's well, but are you?

Roadside checks reveal one in three may be unfit to drive, says Brian Pedley

**P**olice inspector Ian Aspinall is haunted by the first fatal road accident that he dealt with, as a young probationer in the 1970s. "A chap had a heart attack behind the wheel of his car," says the inspector, senior traffic officer with Devon and Cornwall Police.

"He mounted a footpath in a busy shopping area and wiped out an entire family, including a baby." The inspector fiercely maintains that many drivers are potentially lethal to themselves, their passengers and other road users because of poor health.

A series of pioneering on-the-spot medical checks carried out on nearly 300 August bank-holiday motorists in the West country would appear to confirm his worst fears.

Almost a third of the drivers surveyed showed health problems that ranged from abnormal blood pressures to worryingly low blood-sugar levels brought on by travelling for too long without eating.

"Vehicles are better designed than ever. And people spend fortunes maintaining them," says the inspector. "But the one thing that they fail to maintain is themselves." The inspector developed the pilot scheme of MoT-style checks with his wife Christine, a nursing resource manager with Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust.

The couple believe that their holiday campaign, Fit to Drive - Arrive Alive, could be the model for police forces throughout the country to use all the year round.

Drivers arriving at Exeter Services on the M5 in Devon were met by a team of specialist nurses from Taunton's Musgrove Park Hospital. Volunteers were weighed, measured and given eyesight tests before being tested for lung function, blood pressure and blood-sugar levels.

The nurses were concerned, but not surprised, at what they found. One man, who was driving with his wife and children, had to be persuaded to go and eat breakfast for fear that he would collapse while driving at high speed. "After driving through the night without a meal, his blood sugar level was horrifyingly low," says Christine.

"We noticed him at seven in the morning dashing into the loo and going for a coffee. He thought he was just tired. But



Nurses check motorists' blood-sugar levels under the Devon and Cornwall police scheme. Too many drove for far too long without food or rest

### DRIVE FIT, DRIVE SAFE

■ IT ISN'T just your car that needs maintenance. Don't wait to be ill behind the wheel. Have regular health checks.

■ ON LONG trips, it isn't just your car that needs refuelling. Plan your journey to include meal breaks.

■ IN WARM conditions, do not allow yourself to dehydrate while driving. Stop occasionally for a can of soft drink.

■ IF YOUR drive is part of your holiday, remember that the holiday starts from the moment you leave your front door - and not when you reach your destination. You should not feel under pressure to arrive by a particular time. Just relax.



The survey also found asthmatic drivers could not use their inhalers

we warned him that he was at risk of crashing - so he got his wife and kids and they all had breakfast together.

"The worst case that we had was a 28-year-old lorry driver who had extremely high blood pressure. He had driven from Yorkshire to Plymouth and back to Yorkshire, and was on his way back up the motorway to Somerset. He went and had a rest and something to eat. But he needed a complete overhaul."

**T**he biggest group of drivers were on long-haul trips of up to five hours - but only a handful had stopped for a break. Half a dozen drivers showed early symptoms of diabetes, reports Christine, while another small group carried asthma inhalers, but had no idea how to use them.

Of 16 drivers with abnormal weight, most were surprisingly not heavy enough. "We had one 21-year-old woman who was over six foot tall but who weighed just 8½ stone. She could well have not been eating properly and would have got tired much more quickly."

The Aspinalls have long been disturbed at the number of accidents where illness is

the primary cause. Devon and Cornwall has seen 62 such crashes involving injury in one year alone. "They're just the ones that we've been able to quantify," says the inspector.

"But how many more accidents have occurred where the driver has not been fit or well? I believe that some police forces don't even record illness at the wheel."

"I've been to many accidents where you hear 'Oh he was perfectly healthy when he set out', where someone's had a heart attack and bang... they've gone down a verge... but it still does."

"I drive a patrol car at over 100 mph in response to accidents. I've got to be fit. I've got to be healthy and alert. I can't afford not to be - and neither can anybody else."

Inspector Aspinall will continue to press for drivers' health to be given a higher profile in accident prevention campaigns. "We hope that we can use these findings to convince all interested bodies that there are real issues here."

"I remember, at 19 years old, seeing all that carnage. It shouldn't happen any more... but it still does."

sample, the second most dangerous thing was said to be "turning round while driving to give someone in the back seat a smack or have a row".

The children were questioned by Kwik-Fit, the exhaust and tyre company, and their advice was turned into the 10-point code below, which has been welcomed by police chiefs and road safety campaigners.

Peter Holmes, Kwik-Fit managing director said: "Children are extremely observant and increasingly safety conscious. We hope motorists will take these observations to heart."

### Mum, dad, we hate your driving

**T**he true terrors of the school run have been exposed by Britain's children, who have come up with their own safe-driving code after being asked what most annoys them about their parents' motoring habits.

The most dangerous thing in the view of 700 children aged 7-14 was "putting on make-up, combing hair in the mirror and shaving while driving", clearly a reference to parents who leave things to the last minute in the morning. Not surprisingly, and perhaps pointed out by the younger section of the

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AUDI prices are up by an average 1.75 per cent. The newly launched A3 coupe is unaffected, which means the range starts at £13,795 for an A3 1.6 and tops out at £33,803 for the A8 4.2 quattro Sport. The cabriolet range gains a new 2.8 version, good for 174bhp and 136mph. Price £29,995.

### Argent car fans

SILVER is growing fast as a popular car colour, reflecting the return of the "feelgood factor", according to PHH Vehicle Management Services. PHH says red and blue cars account for 25 per cent each of the total, but silver is growing fastest, up 150 per cent on last year. A colour psychologist claims silver is associated with drivers who enjoy their status.

### Costlier quattros

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### Minors go for Minis

More British drivers had Minis as their first car than any other. Touchline, the insurance company, asked 500 motorists what the first car in their lives was, and a fifth said it was the little Mini. Second was Ford's Fiesta, then the Escort.

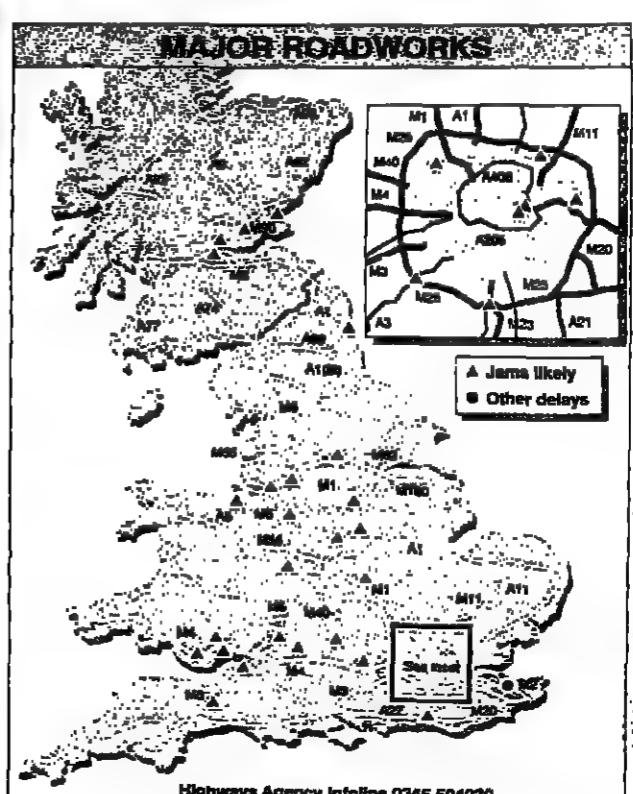
### His other car is ...

SOMEONE clearly found the BBC chequebook to pay Jeremy Clarkson, billed as Britain's most talked-about motoring journalist. He has invested in a new car. But not for him the Mini, a humble Escort or a fruelling Skoda: friends say that the BBC 2 *Top Gear* presenter, famous for his opinionated road tests, has bought himself a Ferrari F355, all £92,000 worth, to sit in the drive alongside his beloved Jaguar and Volvo.

### AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans



1. Don't put on make-up, comb hair or shave.
2. Don't turn around to smack a passenger or row.
3. Don't look at accidents. Concentrate on driving.
4. Don't read a map or set of directions while driving.
5. Don't talk on a mobile phone or carphone.
6. Don't light a cigarette while driving.
7. Don't drink from a can while driving.
8. Fasten seatbelts before starting the car.
9. Don't unwrap and eat sweets or snacks.
10. Don't change cassettes or discs while driving.



It's a radical new future

# The Ka: not for people in grey suits

**T**amara Beckwith, now she would look just great in one, but she already owns a Jeep. Sharron Davies looked a bit too tall for its dimensions, but Kyran Bracken was the right height, though his lime-green shirt would probably clash with the paintwork, writes Kevin Eason.

I went to see the car — in fact, the Ka — and ended up playing spot-the-celebrity. Ten minutes in, I was wishing I spent more time in front of the television because I couldn't put a face to a name, except to register that there were more beautiful women crammed into one restaurant in one lunchtime than I reasonably get to see in a year.

You see, Ford decided that the Ka is not just a Ka — sorry — car. It is a statement of style for the Nineties, a vehicle for people with an "attitudinal mindset", according to Ian McAllister, Ford of Britain's chairman.

If the invitation had explained this, the grey suit would have been back in the wardrobe. As it was, I was standing there clutching my champagne glass looking more like an accountant than style guru. Maybe Ford thought some style would rub off on me if I stood long enough in the shadow of the beautiful people.

No chance. I would have loved to ask Ms Davies, atheist but languid presenter of Channel 4's *Big Breakfast*, about her attitudinal mindset, but she was busy having her picture taken. Ms Beckwith — a stunning blonde apparition apparently famous without any ostensible reason, except that she is tantalisingly wealthy, deeply gorgeous and what we journalists call a "wild child" — looked unapproachable.

All I had to offer was a grey suit, an overdrift and an attitudinal mindset, so I gave her a body swerve and scoured the celebrity guest list for someone a little less glamorous to chat to. That shirt on Bracken, rugby union scrum half and all-round cutie pie, was too intimidating. Katrina Sleppe perhaps, except I had no idea who she was. Or Sarah Cracknell? Umm, still clueless on the identity front. Ha! One I knew: Boy George! On second thoughts.

Why was I here? I am a humble hack. I need a press



Ford has taken a brave step with a radical design

## FORD KA

**Engine:** Four-cylinder 1.3 litre Endura-E (60PS) through five-speed manual gearbox, driving front wheels. **Dimensions:** three-door car; length 3620 millimetres; width 1631mm; wheelbase 2448mm. Boot-space 186 litres, 205 with rear seats folded.

**Performance:** 0 to 60mph in 12.8 seconds (14.3 for power-steering version), top speed 96mph, fuel consumption: 47.9mpg average (42.2mpg power-steering version).

**Equipment:** driver's airbag, seatbelt grabbers, height-adjustable seatbelts, tailgate wash-wipe, tinted glass, engine immobiliser, lights-on warning buzzer. Options include power steering and compact disc player.

**Price:** to be announced October, probably £7,500.

release and a pint of Guinness, not style. Then came a shock. Buried deep among the crowds packed into Mezzo's, the ultra-chic Conran restaurant in London's Soho, was the Ka. Low, curvy, colourful — a sight for eyes sagging under the bombardment of human prettitude.

No wonder Ford was making a fuss. The car, as in Ka, has the curved silhouette of a Beckwith's eyebrow, the angular leanness of a Sharron Davies, the squat, muscular stance of Bracken at the back of a ruck. For once, a carmaker actually made something which looks exciting. Fritz Mayhew, Ford's obviously brave design director, let the youngest members of his team loose on ideas for a tiny city car; more surprisingly, he liked what they came up with.

Two years after Mayhew's approval, it will be in British showrooms — probably priced about £7,500 — the smallest Ford since the Model T and the first of the next generation

cars that buyers might choose just because they want one, not because they need one. As much a fashion accessory as a handbag, says Mayhew.

**K**a is not actually that small, nearly two feet longer than a Mini, though eight inches shorter than the Fiesta is based on. There is no technological leap coming from an existing 1.3-litre four-cylinder engine and five-speed gearbox, so top speed is only just over 90mph. Fuel consumption could average 48 miles to the gallon of unleaded, and the car has a tight turning circle — two features which should appeal to motorway commuters.

There is, however, a revolution in the showroom: forget all that agonising over all the engine sizes, model designations, options and extras; Ka has one engine, one interior, ten colours and two models — Ka and Ka2, which gets power

steering, central locking and a posher stereo. Anything else you want, you have to order. No reason why you should though, because Ka comes with the features you need, from a security system to a radio-cassette as good as any. What you do get as standard is style: great curved lumps of it so cut that Ka will overnight make most other small cars look as conservative as one of John Major's ties.

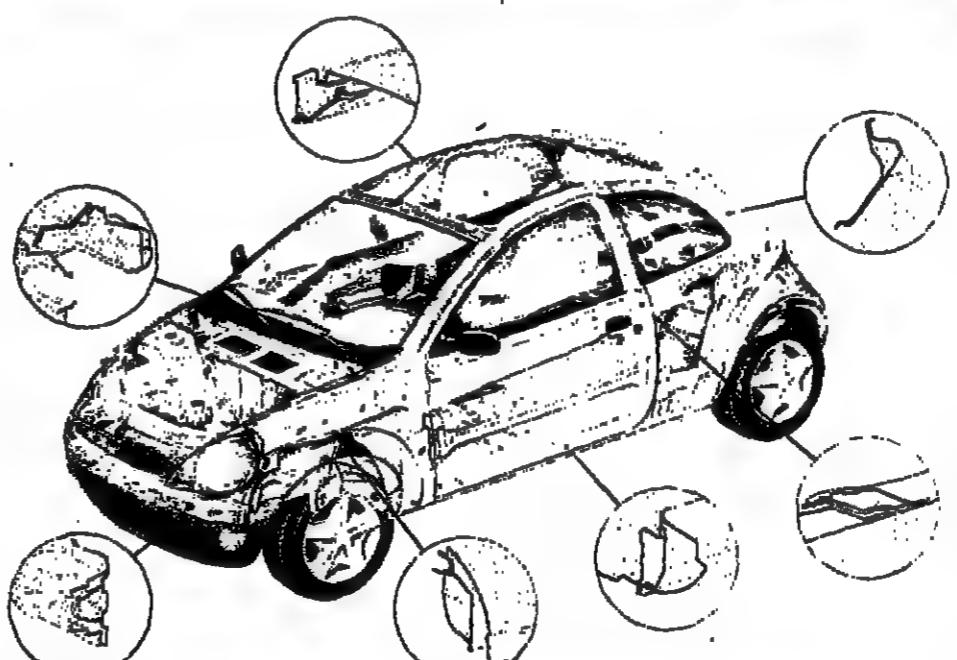
Just one problem though — that name. Mayhew says everybody likes it and Ka makes a nice graphic image. But how do you say it? Ka, with a vowel sound as in apple or bath (for those of us born on the right side of Watford Gap), or Ka as in bar or ... well, car.

Who cares? When the car looks that sweet, it ceases to be an issue. Anyway, Tamara doesn't care because she has too much style to worry about tiddly little things like that. So if I don't care, that means I got style too? Maybe not. Back to the grey suit.

Feisty Fiesta: the Ka's chassis is strengthened at key points to absorb crash impact, with beefier side-impact bars, engine compartment spars, cabin bulkhead and pillars. Airbags are larger and the seatbelts and engine mounts modified



The makers see their new mini as the first of a generation of cars that buyers might choose as a fashion accessory

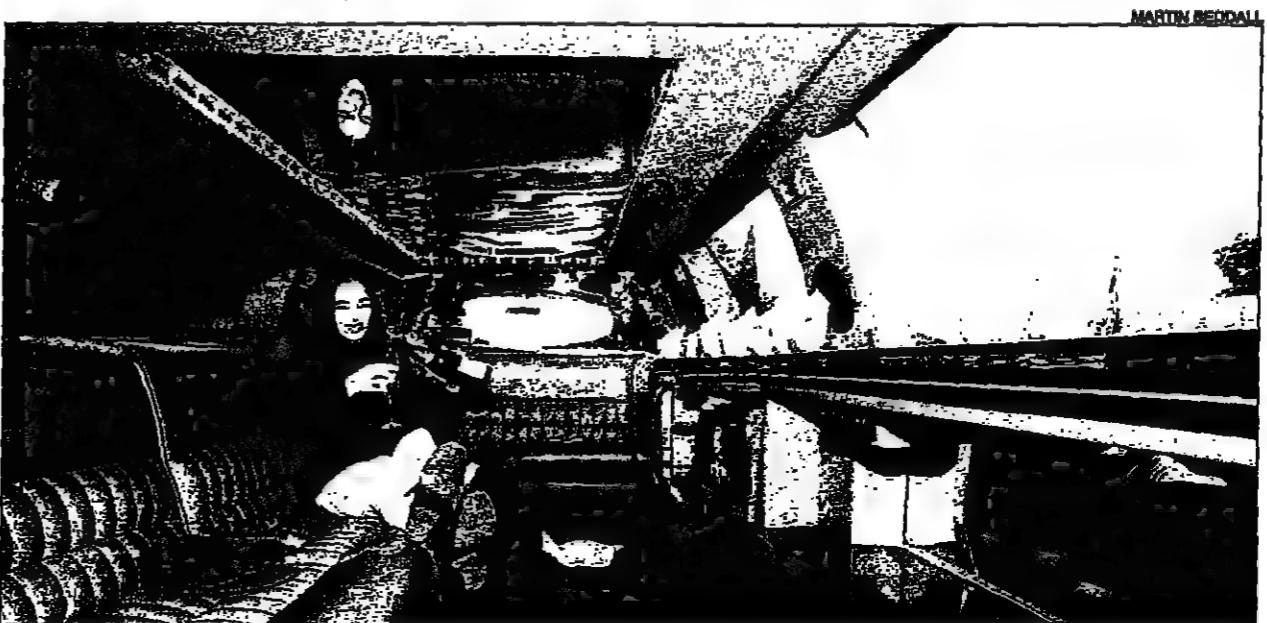


Feisty Fiesta: the Ka's chassis is strengthened at key points to absorb crash impact, with beefier side-impact bars, engine compartment spars, cabin bulkhead and pillars. Airbags are larger and the seatbelts and engine mounts modified

## The long, long drive that Joe Average just loves to take



The Californian-built Lincoln Super Stretch is as long as two Rolls-Royces and carries 14 people. The outside is lit by neon at night, while inside has ample space for two televisions, a video machine, sound system, and triple decanters



Jennai Cox tries a stretch in Britain's biggest hire limousine and finds that it's not just celebrities who go for the luxury life

**D**riving it is like trying to park the Queen Mary in a duckpond: 35ft of long, long, limousine was not built for the sidestreets and tricky short cuts of British towns and cities. When Ian Berne drives what is thought to be the longest car in the country, he has to plan ahead to avoid corners simply too tight for a machine the length of two Rolls-Royces.

Berne, runs a family private car-hire company and decided the Californian-made vehicle — which can carry 14 — would promote a new fashion: limo-lounging.

After giving up classic car sales during the recession, Berne turned to mini-cabbing and noticed a rise in the number and size of the limos cruising London's streets. "It used to be quite rare to see them," he says. "But more and more people

seemed to want to travel in style, so I decided to buy one." That was just the start, and by the time that his fourth stretch limo was due for replacement, an importer told him of the Lincoln Super Stretch.

"I went to have a look, liked what I saw, we talked money and I bought it," recalls Berne. "It was completely spur-of-the-moment and I can still hardly believe it."

The one-off custom made V8-engined car is barely a year old.

The interior has ample space for

two televisions, a video machine,

sound system, triple decanter,

16 champagne flutes and dozens of whisky tumblers — as well as enough space for a football team, their manager and two substitutes.

The designers might have had

lovers of luxury in mind but clearly they did not worry about tight

British corners. Getting out of Berne's driveway involved a three-point turn, incorporating part of the pavement and holding up half a dozen other vehicles. Drivers carrying more than eight passengers should hold Public Service Vehicle licences, and without experience in heavy goods vehicles this elegant white monster would be as hard to turn as a truck.

Cruising wide, traffic-free roads is just like being in any other car, until you look back and realise the boot is several steps away and binoculars might be needed to see out of the rear window. Roundabouts did not present any prob-

lems, not the large ones anyway, but mini-roundabouts have to be virtually ignored, while turning into anything even resembling a tight corner means hijacking the entire road.

**B**ut the car's tunable suspension makes travelling in the Super Stretch feel more comfortable on the road than it looks. Yes, it is guaranteed to attract attention. Berne has seen taxis driven onto central reservations by cabbies distracted by a car which appears and then goes on and on.

Still though, in that

to negotiate the narrower reaches of Britain's streets.

"We can take people into town, but not down any side-roads; Regent Street and Oxford Street are fine," he says. He is happy to take customers anywhere at anytime for anything, but usually has to plan to the route. "Obviously there are roads you simply cannot get down in this car," he says. "And we would not try."

Valued at between £80,000 and £100,000, with insurance costing around £2,000-a-year it is easy to understand why — a scrape down the side of this car could wipe out

a film star for a night. When I'm asked who's in the back, people often don't believe it when I say one famous."

Business is mainly at night, for between £75 and £100 per hour plus VAT. That includes intercom access to the driver and the fibre-optic ceiling lights which change from yellow, to blue, to purple, to pink. The exterior is also covered in neon lighting. "It looks spectacular at night. If you want to be seen in town, this is the car to do it in," Berne says.

With seating room to lie back comfortably, gaze out of the one-way windows and sip champagne, it is hard to imagine a more desirable way to travel.

"Ninety per cent of our business

is Joe Public," Berne says. "Every-

## SAFETY

### Putting muscle on Ford's new baby

**O**ne problem with small cars is that there is not enough room to crash-structure under the bonnet has to absorb the impact of the less front, the less critical zone — a problem faced with the Ka, writes Michael Scarlett.

Ka might look small but weighs only a little less than the Fiesta. Making it as safe a crash as the longer Fiesta means it had to be strengthened carefully. Surviving a head-on collision depends on the cabin remaining intact and the nose of the car crushing in a controlled, progressive way to reduce the huge impact force.

But in front-engined cars the engine and gearbox form a solid, relatively uncrushable lump. So the longer the nose structure the better: shortening the bonnet length, as K does out of a standard Fiesta structure, creates problems.

**K**a has only one choice of engine because fitting a larger one would take up vital crash length, already reduced to only 7.9 inches, roughly half as much as in the Fiesta.

The front cross member above the radiator is changed to help absorb crash energy. So are the side members running each side of the engine compartment. The structure connecting them to each windscreen pillar is much stronger so that crash force is resisted by the pillars. The bulkhead between the engine and cabin is strengthened to prevent the instrument panel moving too far backwards in a crash.

In a full-frontal crash, modified engine-carrying mounts allow the engine and transmission to move backwards as much as possible unimpeded. But in a partial collision, corner to corner, a mount breaks to allow the engine to swing out of the way.

**I**t's doors, 4in longer than the three-door Fiesta, are strengthened to help resist side impact. To help the cabin resist crushing, the centre tunnel in the floor is stiffened with extra bracing. The middle roof pillars are also made stronger and there are changes at the back of the car to improve rear impact absorption. The standard equipment driver's air bag is 50 per cent larger and the optional passenger bag is longer, because the passenger sits further back. There are no seat belt tensioners. Seat belts are allowed to stretch 40 per cent more than in the Fiesta.

Ford claims these changes make Ka at least as safe in crash absorption as the Fiesta and the best of the Fiesta's rivals — no mean achievement in such a shortened car.





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SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 14 1996

## CAR 96

### CAR...TOONS



In hindsight, Vaughan Freeman explains how not to buy a beautiful — but dodgy — old car

## Love led astray by a classic chassis

**I**t was the most beautiful of cars, a gorgeous Jaguar Mark II that usually smelt of leather and wood, except when you filled it up — then it reeked of the petrol pouring from the perforated tank.

Owning a Mark II, the original "blagger's Jag" beloved of 1960s bank robbers and Inspector Morse, was my one and only foray into classic car ownership. Swept away by the car's looks, £15,000 was paid for a car thatingers in the memory for its looks, and its repeated and costly trips to the garage.

Like thousands of other would-be classic owners who, come summer, swap cheques for automotive heartache, all it took to convince me that money and car should be exchanged, was a misty-eyed look and a test drive at night.

The petrol tank problem was revealed on our first long drive. The tank was built from two halves, riveted together along the midrib: all very well until rust takes hold of the rivets. Returning to the car after topping the tank for the first time, it was found sitting in a pool of petrol. A mere 9000 later, the car had a leak-proof tank. The bank account had started not so much leaking as haemorrhaging.

The Jaguar only had seatbelts in the front, which meant that our new baby daughter, Emily, had to go in the front, while Muriel sat unrestrained in the back.

Having bought the car in the winter, another drawback, the non-existent Mark II heating, became apparent. Driving required pilot and passengers to wear full skiing gear to avoid hypothermia.

While Summer solved the cold problem, another arose, since clearly the petrol pump hated the warmer weather, though an adroit whack could sometimes ease the problem. More money was spent on the petrol pump, and more still on the handbrake. An outbreak of rust along the bottom of the boot and doors, together with a second child and redundant

cy, hastened the car's inevitable sale, but only after more money had been spent to stop the spreading tin worm, topped with a partial respray.

The AA says thousands fall prey to classic car madness every year. Its files bulge with examples of classic dreams turned nightmare.

Head of AA Vehicle Inspections Stephen Small says: "Between 60 and 70 per cent of the classic cars we see are in such poor condition that repair work to restore them to roadworthiness would cost a small fortune."

The electronic paint-depth gauge really comes into its

own when inspecting classic cars. Much of the appalling restoration work is down to ignorance, yet the lengths some bad restorers will go to to disguise rotten bodywork — even using spray-painted strips of newspaper — is horrifying.

So how can a would-be classic buyer minimise possible catastrophe? The AA advises that any car be examined by an expert to spot potential problems, and that such a car is not bought as the prime source of transport, since reliability is still a relatively modern concept.

By paying as much as you

can afford initially for the best condition car, you could save major bills, rather than following the alternative of buying a cheaper car and hoping to put it right later on.

Research the make of car you are going to buy thoroughly, through specialist magazines and books, and make contact with an owners' club. Also research as thoroughly as possible the particular car you are looking at. Again, an owners' club could well have information on the car.

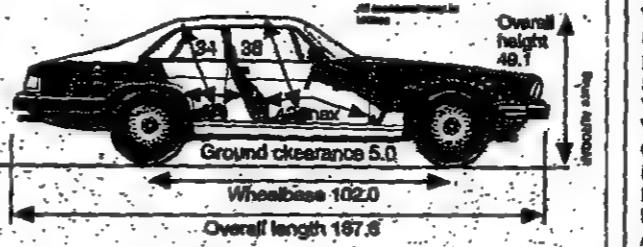
If all this sounds too daunting, there is some good news. Money can be saved by insur-

ing through an owners' club or by a limited-mileage classic car policy. Also, cars over 25 years of age are now exempt from paying road tax although they must still display the '25 year' tax disc.

So, is classic car ownership worthwhile? Of course. The Jaguar is now gone, safe in the hands of an equally barny and masochistic classic car loving friend, but the photographs of it sit snugly next to the children's, and the memories are fond. Now, if you'll excuse me while I flick through the For Sale pages of my classic car mag ...

### USED CAR BRIEF

**JAGUAR XJS**  
To be driven on the Riviera with Grace Kelly at the wheel and Cary Grant by her side, the XJS is all about glamour. Launched in the wake of an oil crisis, owners were not good for the thirsty XJS which had to fight the likes of the E-type that had died the year before. Critics said it had been designed by "a team of three and they weren't talking to each other." Two decades later the XJS is still going strong, but will be phased out when the XKR goes on sale this year. Range radically revamped in 1991.



**SAFETY:** Jaguar's XJ saloons are among the strongest and safest cars on the road. The XJS is similar in strength to the V12. Anti-lock brakes became standard from 1982, and options side airbags from 1992.

**REPLACEMENT PARTS:** Parts (including VAT) for V12 automatic, £1,500; 5.3-litre manual, £1,200; 5.3-litre V8, £1,200; 5.3-litre V12, £2,500; 5.3-litre V12 with anti-lock brakes, £2,500; 5.3-litre V12 with side airbags, £2,500; 5.3-litre V12 with side airbags and anti-lock brakes, £3,000; 5.3-litre V12 with side airbags and anti-lock brakes and side airbags, £3,500.

**PRICE:** For earlier cars expect to pay £3,000 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre manual, £2,500 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre V8, £2,500 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre V12, £3,000 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre V12 with anti-lock brakes, £3,500 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre V12 with anti-lock brakes and side airbags, £4,000 for a 1982 V12 5.3-litre V12 with anti-lock brakes and side airbags and side airbags.

**OVERALL:** The XJS must come with full service history and optional extras be removed. Start clear of DPF, restoration costs: Coupe: £2,500; and 5-door: £3,000; V8: £3,500; V12: £4,000.

**WHAT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE WORLD'S FIRST ELECTRIC-POWERED HIRE CAR** has joined the fleet of the multinational Hertz company in Austria. The Citroën AX Electrique is part of a pilot project in Vienna to introduce more environmentally friendly vehicles.

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Mitsubishi Galant 4WD 2.5 Coupé	12795 12795
Rover 216 Cabriolet	11895 11995
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Prices rounded to simulate actual dealer listcourt prices. H = hatchback; S = saloon. Price changes based on M-avg. low mileage cars. Figures supplied by CAP Motor Research.

WHAT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE WORLD'S FIRST ELECTRIC-POWERED HIRE CAR

has joined the fleet of the multinational Hertz company in Austria. The Citroën AX Electrique is part of a pilot project in Vienna to introduce more environmentally friendly vehicles.

The car has a range of between 70 and 90 kilometres (45-55 miles) and can travel at up to 100kmh (62mph). Daily hire rates start at about £53. Externally, the two-door car looks exactly like any other AX, but it is powered by a bank of

batteries which can be recharged overnight.

"If the electric-powered car proves popular, we plan to introduce similar vehicles in other Hertz locations in Austria," says a company official.

The firm, which claims to be the world's largest in car hire, has 25 rental centres in Austria including seven at airports.

If the experiment is successful, the use of electric-powered vehicles could be extended elsewhere in the network, which covers 130 countries.

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Chris Smith tells **Chris Smith** why being caught drink-driving opened his eyes

ar addict Rick Wakeman, keyboard player with the rock group Yes, is a successful performer and a man in his own right; his solo albums include *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and the soundtrack to the forthcoming Michael Caine film *Bullet to the Head*.

True rock'n'roll tradition, he is hazy about the exact number of cars he has owned, though it is in the region of 250. Wakeman says it is the schoolboy thing that has left him, "I can't help it. It's nothing to do with being flash lifestyle thing. Big cars fast, or just nice old cars are wonderful. It's as simple as that."

*How did you first learn how to drive?*

en I was about fifteen, I had a dad who worked as a driving instructor who gave me lessons. I came home from school. My parents, of course, didn't know I had been driving. I gave me ten driving lessons at the ABC School of Driving for my seventeenth birthday. The instructor was shocked when, on the first lesson, I got in and drove off. I told him saying, "there's more to life than meets the eye". A few weeks later I passed first time in a Fiat Cortina.

*What was your first car?*

1958 side-valve Ford Anglia. E. which I bought for £30 from C. Slim Motors in Sudbury. The insurance cost £5 from a company Soutball who were notorious for not paying up. Its top speed was 50mph flat out, downhill with the

## Rock star's dream: an old Cresta

wind behind us and everyone leaning forward. The seats were torn and it had no floor because although it was only eight years old, it was rotten. I absolutely loved it and polished what little metal there was on it. I part-exchanged it for a 1957 Vauxhall Victor estate.

*What cars do you drive now?*

A 1985 Dodge B250 van that I love dearly, a 1962 Vauxhall Cresta Friary estate and a Jaguar XJ6. The Cresta is a dream fulfilled. When I first started out I badly wanted the PA Cresta but I couldn't afford it.

*What is your dream car?*

A Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud. I have owned several in the past and it has the most wonderful view out across a sensational long bonnet. I would like another, even though they are totally impractical in today's driving conditions.

*What is your most hated car?*

My wife's Range Rover. It is a pig.

being in the fast lane or cutting people up. That winds me up more than a lunatic going at 140mph.

*What do you listen to on your stereo while driving?*

My radio is permanently tuned to Radio 4, although I have also tried Talk Radio in the past. Radio 3 gets an airing on early mornings if I have a long drive. I take loads of comedy tapes with me — Hancock and the Navy Lark, and full-length operas as I travel on my own a lot.

*What is the most unusual thing you have ever done in your car?*

I once relieved myself of a seriously full bladder while stuck in traffic in America. I was on a multi-lane freeway and I couldn't hold on any longer. I had four large bottles of Gatorade in a cool box, so I emptied them out of the window and filled three while smiling sweetly at the drivers in the cars around me. Several of them were bemused by the look of ecstasy on my face. I hope to this day that a thirsty tramp didn't retrieve the bottles from the service station but that I dumped them in.

*If you were Secretary of State for Transport, what is the first thing you would do?*

I would re-test people over the age of 70. Driving has changed vastly from when they first started. I'm pleased the driving test is being made harder — it's much too easy. I would also invest in skid-pan centres. The test doesn't tell new drivers what to do if, say, you're side-swiped and go into a skid. The

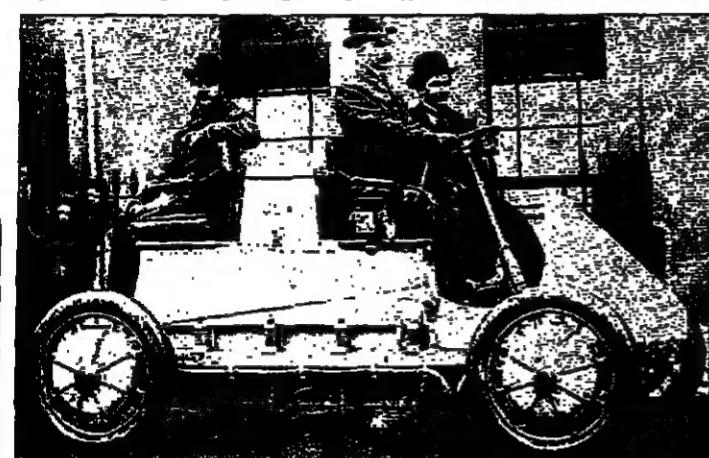
money would be recovered from the drop in the cost of medical bills after accidents.



Wakeman with his Vauxhall Cresta Estate: "When I started I wanted one, but couldn't afford it."

*What is your favourite car advertisement?*

The advertisements in the motor section of *Exchange and Mart* or the *Thames Valley Auto Trader*. I have great fun going through them, and the classic car mags looking for good buys. That's how I got the Cresta.



The sinister-looking Lohner-Porsche car, last heard of in Luton

## Green hunt is on for Porsche's electric shocker

Ian Morton joins the search for an old idea whose time may finally have come

**I**t was a solid, even sinister contraption which made no concessions to the carriage-like elegance expected of the automobile of the 1890s. The creation of a virtually unknown electrical engineer working in Vienna who had patented its systems in 1897. It was the sensation of the Paris World Exhibition of 1898. And it disappeared in England.

The hunt is on for clues to what happened to one of the very first cars designed by Ferdinand Porsche: a vehicle whose wheel-hub electric motors first demonstrated a principle that modern engineers

recognise as having huge potential for greening the motor industry.

As Porsche approaches the centenary of its founding father's early efforts for the Viennese carmaker Jakob Lohner, its archivists are urgently seeking information on the Paris car's fate.

They know it was a four-wheel drive development of an even earlier design in which only the front wheels were powered.

Electric cars were the great hope at the end of the 19th century, but Porsche's monster was different. Instead of a 'proper' transmission carried a 2.5 kW electric motor in each wheel. Porsche also developed a 'mixte' or hybrid system whereby the power for the hub motors was generated primarily by a small petrol engine.

Porsche's employer Lohner dropped both battery and hybrid systems when it became apparent that neither would stand up commercially against internal combustion and in 1906 sold the hub-motor and hybrid patents. The

hub-motors concept made it into space in 1971 when it was used on NASA's moon buggy. The hybrid principle's potential for low-pollution motoring is now recognised.

**T**he idea features among many of the 125 projects known to be in development by major carmakers.

Porsche is involved in some of these projects, though is bound not to divulge which. And now the company is delving down to its deepest roots to register its claim to seminal involvement with this rediscovered innovation.

## AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

## FIVE CLASSIC CARS TO BE WON

Plus every entrant will receive an exclusive limited-edition Classic Sports Car First Day Cover FREE

### HOW TO ENTER

**The Times**, in association with *The Sunday Times* and the Royal Mail, is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the British motor industry by giving readers the chance to win one of the following five cars:

- Triumph TR3A, 1960
- MG TC, 1949
- Morgan Plus Four
- Austin Healey 100/4, 1954
- Jaguar XK 120, 1948

PLUS, every reader of *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* entering our competition can receive an exclusive, limited-edition First Day Cover, with details of five classic marques of postwar sports cars, free of charge.

● If you are a *Times* reader you can enter by sending the completed form, below, with seven differently-numbered tokens from *The Times* together with the token in *The Sunday Times* tomorrow. Readers of *The Sunday Times* can enter by sending the form with the tokens printed last Sunday and tomorrow with three differently-numbered tokens from *The Times*.

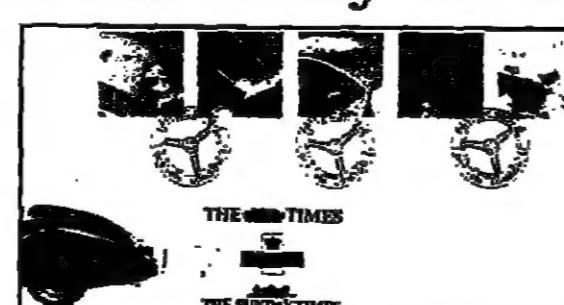
### FREE limited-edition first day covers

The first day cover, pictured right, has been produced by the Royal Mail exclusively for *Times Newspapers*. It features five stamps which will be launched on Tuesday, October 1, ranging in denominations from 20p to 63p.

Royal Mail decided to mark British

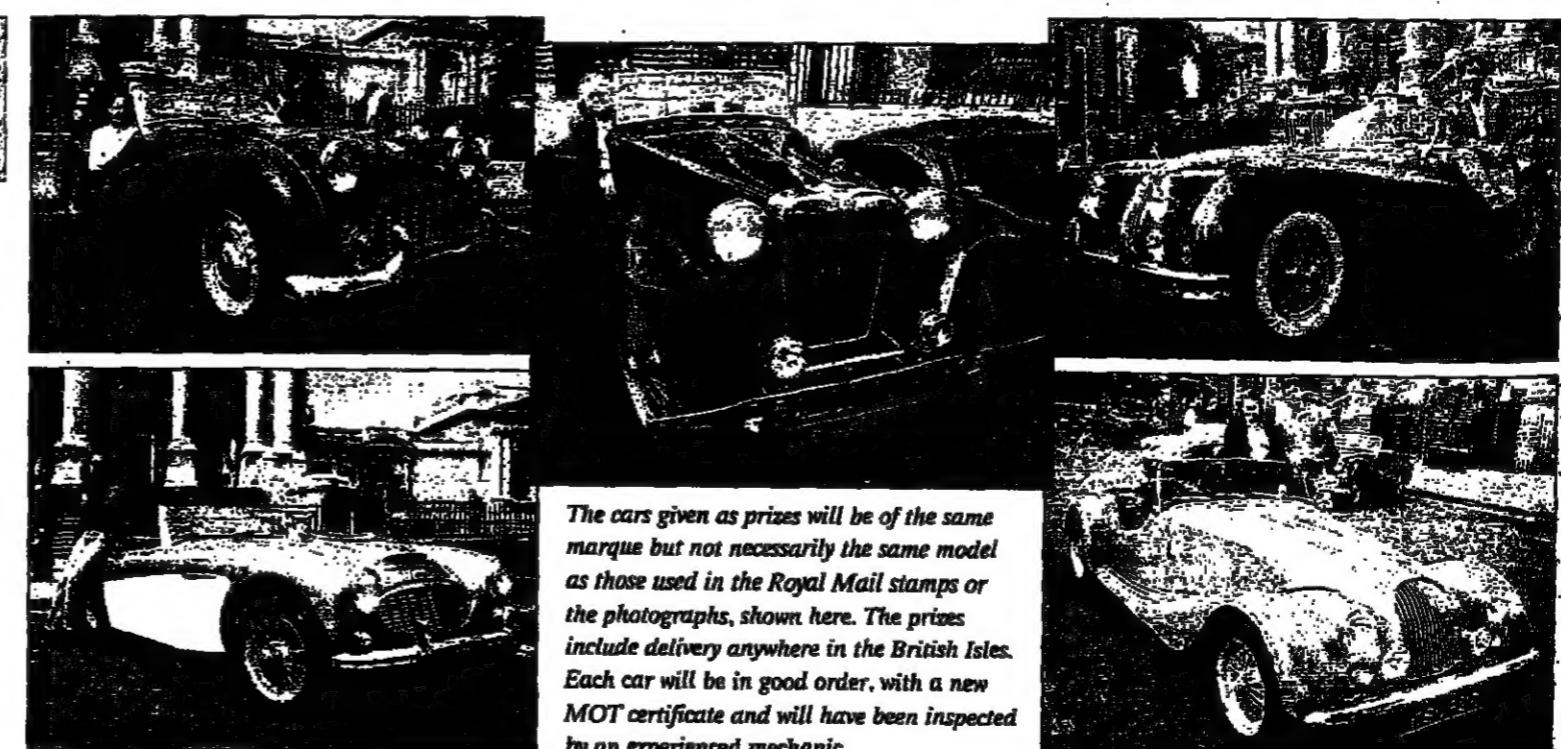
motoring's celebration of two centenaries this year with a set of five special stamps. The first

event of 100 years ago was the Locomotives on Highways Act 1896 which allowed the Local Government Board to raise the speed limit for cars from 4mph to 12mph. The British motor industry also began in 1896 with the



registration of Daimler to manufacture British-built cars in Coventry.

● Presentation packs, first day covers, postcards, and the Classic Sports Car stamps are available by post from the British Philatelic Bureau: call 0345 641 641 (Monday to Friday); and most Post Offices — for more details call 0345 22 33 44. First day covers are also available from BPCPA: 0181 886 6744.



The cars given as prizes will be of the same marque but not necessarily the same model as those used in the Royal Mail stamps or the photographs shown here. The prizes include delivery anywhere in the British Isles. Each car will be in good order, with a new MOT certificate and will have been inspected by an experienced mechanic.

### THE TIMES/THE SUNDAY TIMES CLASSIC CAR COMPETITION ENTRY FORM

For your chance to win a classic sports car complete this coupon and post it with either: two tokens from *The Sunday Times* and three from *The Times*; or one from *The Sunday Times* and seven from *The Times*; to: Classic Sports Car Competition, Times Newspapers/Royal Mail, PO Box 69, Leighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 7ZD, to arrive by September 28, 1996. Tokens will appear each day in *The Times* until September 21. Tokens in *The Sunday Times* appear on September 8 and 15.

What was the speed limit for a light locomotive raised to in 1896? Tick answer a) 10mph b) 12mph c) 15mph

If I win the competition, the car I wish to own is (tick one box only):

- Triumph TR3A, 1960;  MG TC, 1949;
- Austin Healey 100/4, 1954;  Jaguar XK120, 1948;
- Morgan Plus Four. I have made this choice because:

(answer in no more than 12 words)

Please tick box if you wish to receive a limited-edition Classic Sports Car Royal Mail First Day Cover

Full name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime tel \_\_\_\_\_

IT WOULD HELP US IF YOU ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS:  
Which of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

- 15-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-6 copies) each week?

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy occasionally (3 copies or less)?

Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (2-4 copies) a monthly?

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive further offers from Royal Mail, *The Times* or associated companies

TERMS AND CONDITIONS Entrants must be 18 or over. Staff of *Times Newspapers* and Royal Mail and their families or agents are not permitted to enter. The winners of the cars will be the senders of the five correctly-completed entries deemed by the judges to have the most original tie-breakers. The prize does not include insurance or road tax. There is no cash alternative. *Times Newspapers Limited* is under no obligation to inform readers if their application is incorrect. Back copies for missing tokens can be supplied subject to usual charges.

CHANGING TIMES



Alan Copps reports on the sensational prices at the auction of an eccentric American recluse's extraordinary collection of rare and unrestored classics

## Stutz hoard's stunning million-dollar sale

The sale of the extraordinary collection of classic Stutzs and other cars — probably the biggest "barn find" of recent years — gathered by eccentric A. K. Miller at his home in East Orange, Vermont, exceeded all expectations last weekend.

Buyers from around the world travelled to the remote farm where the reclusive Miller had kept the cars shut up in sheds and barns for decades. The story of his collection was told exclusively in *Car 96* last month. The auction tent was overflowing with buyers who sent the

total for the cars, including 37 Stutzs, and related spares to more than two million dollars. Every lot was sold and the final value of bids reached £1,398,541.

Top price of £10,720 was paid for a 1911 Stutz Model 4C Bearcat, closely followed by £107,200 for a 1933 Stutz DV32 Roadster and £96,640 for a 1930 Stutz Eight supercharged coupé. The best non-Stutz was a 1926 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Piccadilly Roadster which went for £82,560.

Malcolm Welford, Christie's expert said: "The great attraction was that these cars were all in original

condition. The Rolls-Royce, for example, was virtually untouched and all the Stutzs were unrestored. The interest in the vast amount of spares and automobilia that Miller had accumulated was enormous.

One very mixed lot, described simply as 'remaining contents of Shed 1' sold for \$9,200 against a top estimate of just \$500. People were attracted by the extraordinary story behind this collection."

On the first day of the sale Christie's also held their annual auction at the Beaulieu Autojumble at the National Motor Museum. Highest price there was £100,500

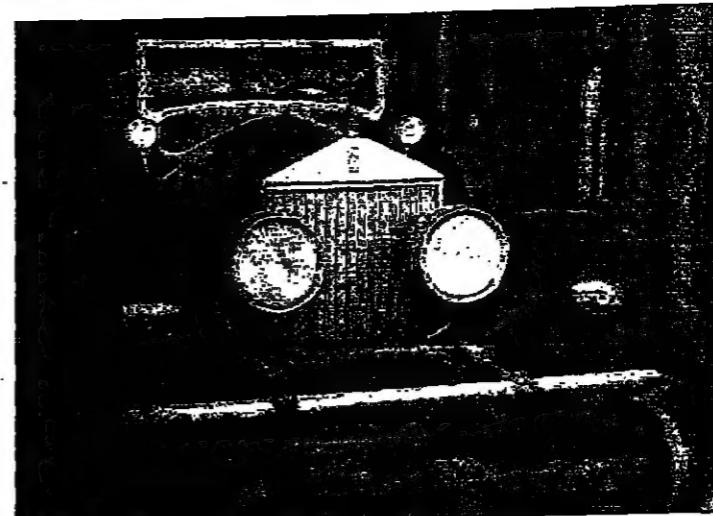
for a 1928 4½-litre Bentley which had been in the same ownership since 1939 and had been completely restored in the 1960s.

Most striking prices, however,

were those fetched by two 1970s open Mercedes-Benzes from the estate of Mrs Olivia Wright, who lived in Oxfordshire and died earlier this year. She obviously enjoyed some stylish and sporty motoring since the two cars shared garage space with a drophead Rolls-Royce and a Ford Mustang. A 1970 280SE Cabriolet estimated at £15-£20,000 fetched £34,500 and a 2.8-litre "Pagoda top" 280SL convertible from 1971 fetched £20,700 against an estimate of £8-£12,000.

"It shows that people are prepared to pay very good prices for such well-engineered cars even when they are comparatively recent," said Welford.

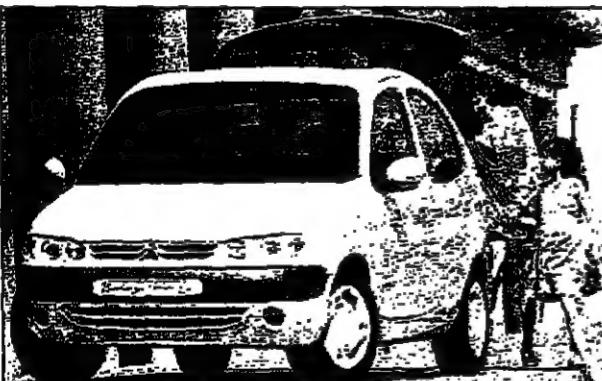
Next weekend, Brooks will be selling a rare piece of Yorkshire motoring history at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate. A Bradford-built 1930 Jowett Grey Knight saloon which has been owned for the last 17 years by Michael Koch-Osborne, grandson of the much-lamented company's founder, is estimated at £6-£7,000.



This Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Piccadilly was sold for £82,560



Citroën's range is based on the carmaker's do-everything five-seat recreational vehicle, the Berlingo Multispace hatchback, now on sale in France



The Grand Voyager, left, is designed for the great outdoors. The Bubble Saloon, centre, offers masses of room. The Beach Coupé has an open back with pull-out deckchairs



## Your emotion set in motion

**M**otorists of the future will be able to mix and match their cars just as today they pick suits for work, shorts for the beach, or a little black number for that special evening out.

Not so long ago the family car had to be the Jack of all trades, but increasingly car designers are following the world of fashion. Setting the pace is Citroën, with the unveiling this week of a car tailored for the beach, another for weekend drives in the country with friends, and a third for taking the children to visit their favourite Aunt.

All are based on Citroën's do-everything five-seat recreational vehicle, the new three-door Berlingo Multispace hatchback, which is already on sale in France.

The "fantasy" derivatives will be seen at next month's Paris and Birmingham Motor Shows and it is clear they will have a strong influence on the design and development of the French manufacturer's future vehicles.

The Berlingo Multispace gets round the main criticism of recreational vehicles, which

**Vaughan**  
**Freeman on**  
**Citroën's**  
**launch of the**  
**lifestyle**  
**concept vehicle**

is that luggage space suffers as the passengers pile in. It features five seats, huge headroom thanks to the very tall roofline, and enough room between the rear seat and the full-length rear hatch for 300kg of payload.

The main drawback is that apart from the rear hatch there are only the driver and front passenger doors; rear seat passengers have to scramble into the back, not ideal for an arthritic older person or for parents struggling to clunk-click children into the rear.

Citroën communications director Bernard Guerreau says: "The Berlingo Multispace is a car for all countries, including England, and the car will be launched in England by early next year. It is not an Espace or an Evasion. It is smaller, and very cheap. In France it sells for Fr85,000 (around £10,000)."

Citroën has used the Multispace as the platform for all three concept cars. The Beach Coupé features a cork gearstick knob, just two front gearshift knobs in the cabin, and an open back area like a pick-up truck with pull-out deckchairs for Baywatch fans and a tailgate that lowers for use as a ramp for getting surfboards or cycles on board.

Then there is the Grand Voyager which, says Citroën,

"is designed for wide open spaces, and the call of the wild. an invitation to travel with friends". With a full-length sunroof, the delicately clad Voyager, with silk and brocade upholstery, is clearly not designed with sticky-fingered young passengers in mind.

Most interesting of the three is the Bubble Saloon, which looks as if somebody has inflated a Nissan Micra to near bursting point. The pumpkin-shaped Bubble is about as round as a car can get without rolling away. The result inside though is metres of head and leg room, front and back for even the tallest of the five passengers in a voluminous interior.

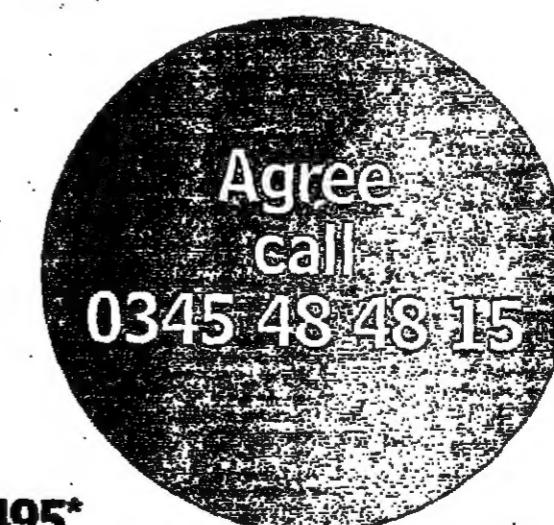
**W**ill the three make it into production though? Citroën and other manufacturers believe Europe, where 75 per cent of new cars are saloons, will follow America where only 60 per cent are saloons and the rest a mix of off-roaders, MPVs and pick-ups. In Europe, such alternative vehicles had only 10 per cent of the new car market in 1995, compared to 15 per cent now and a predicted 20 per cent by 2005.

Which is where Berlingo and its concept derivatives come in, says Citroën marketing and planning director Luc Epron: "Concept cars are a practical exploration, an ongoing evaluation allowing us to establish a dialogue with today's car users about what tomorrow's car might look like." In other words, big crowds around the Citroën stand at Birmingham could well see us driving cork-lined cars with deckchairs in the back by the turn of the century.

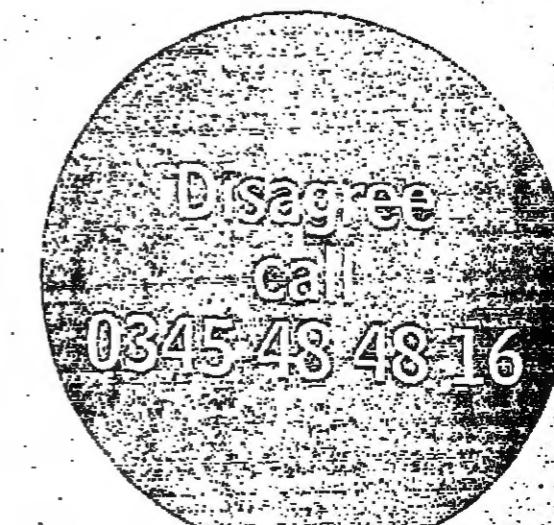
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